

An Exposition of The Hearts

مكاشفة القلوب

Al-Ghazālī

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An Exposition of the Hearts

Imam Al-Ghazali

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INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allâh, peace and salutations upon our leader Muhammad, the Messenger of Allâh, upon his family, his Companions, his followers, and those who trod the path of guidance as taught by him.

This book, “*Mukâshafah al-Qulûb al-Muqarrib ilâ Hadrah ‘Allâm al-Ghuyûb*”, is the abridged version of the book “*Mukâshafah al-Qulûb al-Akbar*” by Imâm Abû Hâmid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazzâlî. This book comprises 111 chapters explaining conduct, manners, virtues of deeds, acts of obedience and the importance of doing them, acts of disobedience and the importance of abstaining from them, matters concerning this world, death, the grave, the hereafter, the reckoning [of deeds], and the reward or punishment that will be meted out.

Al-Ghazzâlî commences each chapter by explaining the topic and introducing its theme. He then quotes Qur’ânic verses and Prophetic Traditions in this regard. He then follows all this with statements, anecdotes and stories from some Sahâbah, Tâbi‘în and righteous people. All these serve to awaken the souls, embellish the hearts, remind us of Allâh ﷻ, His greatness, might, power, and His disposition among His creation. In this book of his, al-Ghazzâlî follows the course of the Qur’ân and Sunnah regarding which our leader, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I have left among you something which if you hold on to after me, you will never go astray, the Book of Allâh and my Sunnah.”

May Allâh ﷻ inspire us to practise on His Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ in our beliefs, the Sharî‘ah, our character, manners, methodology, society and life so that we can become as Allâh willed us to be – the best nation sent for the guidance of mankind. We ask Allâh to guide us through His guidance, to engulf us with His mercy, to forgive us, our parents and all Muslims. Salutations to our leader Muhammad, the unlettered Prophet, to his family, his Companions, and those who follow in goodness till the day of reckoning.

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BIOGRAPHY OF IMÂM GHAZZÂLÎ

He is Abû Hâmid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazzâlî, who is given the title of *Hujjatul Islam*, Zayn ad-Dîn at-Tûsî, al-Faqîh ash-Shâfi‘î. [1] He was born in Tûs [2] in the year 450 A.H.

It is related that his father was a righteous person who only ate from the earnings of his own hands. He used to spin wool and sell it in his shop. When death approached him, he made a bequest that his two sons [Abû Hâmid] and Ahmed should be under the care of a friend of his who was a sûfî and a very good person. He said to his friend: “I am extremely sad that I was unable to learn to write. I would now like to make up for this loss of mine by teaching these two sons of mine. You should therefore teach them and you may use all the wealth that I leave behind for this purpose. When the father passed away, this sûfî devoted himself to teaching them till all that little wealth which the father had left for his sons was used up. He therefore said to the two boys: “You should know that I have spent all that belonged to you. I am a very poor person and am unable to help you. I therefore feel that you should admit yourself in a *madrasah* (religious school). You will thus be students who will also receive food which will help you in your time (in the *madrasah*).” Both the boys did this and this was the cause of their good fortune and high status. Al-Ghazzâlî used to relate this incident and say: “We sought knowledge not for Allâh [i.e. for food] but Allâh made it such that this seeking of knowledge be solely for Him.”

It was the habit of al-Ghazzâlî’s father to frequent the jurists and to sit in their company. He used to serve them abundantly, endeavour to do good to them, and spend on them whatever he could. When he used to hear their speech, he would cry and beseech Allâh and ask Him to bless him with a son who would be an orator, and to make him a jurist. Allâh accepted both these supplications of his: as for Abû Hâmid, he was the most proficient jurist from among his contemporaries and he was the imâm of his time. As for Ahmed, he became a great orator: dumb rocks would become soft at

hearing his admonitions, and the hearts of those who were present in his assemblies would tremble. [3]

In his youth, al-Ghazzâlî studied a bit of jurisprudence under Ahmed Muhammad ar-Râdhkânî. He then went to Naysâbûr and remained in the company of Imâm al-Haramayn Abû al-Ma‘âlî al-Juwaynî. He worked very hard till he gained a mastery in the juridical schools, differences, debating and logic. He also studied wisdom and philosophy and mastered all these sciences. He fully understood the speech of the scholars of these sciences and applied himself to refuting them and proving their claims to be baseless. He wrote books on each of these sciences in a most beautiful way and presented them in a wonderful manner.

Al-Ghazzâlî was extremely intelligent, correct in his opinions, possessed a strong memory, far-sighted, went into the depths of meanings, and a debater who provided solid proofs. [4]

When Imâm al-Haramayn al-Juwaynî passed away, al-Ghazzâlî left in order to go to the minister, Nizâm al-Mulk. The latter's assembly was one of great scholars. Al-Ghazzâlî debated with the '*ulamâ*' of this assembly and his speech overpowered them. They all acknowledged his virtue and Nizâm al-Mulk looked up to him with respect and honour. He then appointed him as a teacher in his *Madrasah Nizzâmîyyah* in Baghdad in the year 484 A.H. [5]

Al-Ghazzâlî went to Baghdad with great adornment and the people gave him a grand welcome. His opinions were well accepted and his following increased to such an extent that it even superseded the following that was enjoyed by the leaders and ministers. [6] The people were attracted to his beautiful speech, his excellent virtues, his eloquence, the fine points that he made and his subtle references. The people loved him greatly. He took up the responsibilities of teaching knowledge and imparting it through teaching, issuing *fatwâs* and writing. He enjoyed great fame, a high status, exclusive authority and great popularity. He became an icon of his time and people from distant places used to travel to meet him.

Eventually, he distanced himself from every form of fame and left all these things behind him. He then travelled to the House of Allâh in Makkah and

then went for the pilgrimage in Dhul Hijjah 488 A.H. He appointed his brother as his deputy teacher in Baghdad.

After his return from the pilgrimage in 489 A.H. he went to Damascus and remained there for a few days. He then went to Bayt al-Maqdis [in Jerusalem]. He remained in solitude with his Sustainer for some time and then returned to Damascus. He remained in seclusion in the eastern minaret of the *Jâme' masjid* [of Damascus] and that was his place of residence. [7]

One day, he coincidentally went to the *Madrasah Amîniyah* and overheard the teacher saying: “al-Ghazzâlî said...” – the teacher was teaching something of al-Ghazzâlî’s teachings. [On hearing this], al-Ghazzâlî feared haughtiness and therefore left Damascus. He then began travelling to different places. He went to Egypt and then turned towards Alexandria. He remained there for some time. It is said that he wanted to go to Sultân Yûsuf ibn Tâshifîn, the Sultan of Morocco, when he heard of the latter’s justice. But then news of the latter’s death reached him. Al-Ghazzâlî continued travelling to different places when he eventually returned to Khurâsân and taught in the *Madrasah Nizzâmîyyah* in Naysâbûr for a short while.

He then returned to Tûs and established a *madrasah* for jurists next to his house and a *khânqâh* for the sûfis. He distributed his time in reciting the Qur’ân, sitting in the company of the pious, teaching students, and remaining constant in offering salâh, fasting and other acts of worship. He continued in all this till he was engulfed by the mercy and pleasure of Allâh. He passed away in Tûs on Monday, 14 Jumâdâ al-Ukhrâ 505 A.H. at the age of 55. [8]

Abû al-Faraj al-Jauzî says in his book, *ath-Thabât ‘inda al-Mamât*: Ahmed, the brother of Imâm al-Ghazzâlî says: “When it was *fajr* time on Monday morning, my brother, Abû Hâmid, performed ablution and said: ‘Bring me a *kafan* (shroud).’ He took it, kissed it and placed it on his eyes. He then said: ‘I hear and obey the call to go to the Master [Allâh].’ He then stretched out his legs, faced the *qiblah* and passed away before sunrise. May Allâh sanctify his soul.” [9]

The famous poet and literateur, Abû al-Muzaffar Muhammad al-Abyûrdî elegized al-Ghazzâlî in the following poem:

مضى وأعظم مفقود فجعت به — من لا نظير له في الناس يخلفه

“He passed away. And I have now been struck by one of the greatest losses. There is no one among people who can take his place.”

After al-Ghazzâlî passed away, Imâm Ismâ‘îl al-Hâkimî, gave an example of him through the words of Abû Tammâm from a famous poem of his:

عجبت لصبري بعده وهو ميت — وكنت امرؤا أبكي دما وهو غائب

على أنها الأيام قد صرن كلها — عجائب, حتى ليس فيها عجائب

“I was astonished at my patience after him when he died. When previously I used to shed tears of blood at his absence. All this is because all the days have become astonishing. So much so that there is nothing astonishing left.”

Al-Ghazzâlî was buried on the outskirts of at-Tâbarrân, a district of Tûs. May Allâh have mercy on him. [\[10\]](#)

The following are some of al-Ghazzâlî’s sayings and statements as recorded by az-Zabîdî in his book “ *Ittihâf as-Sâdah al-Muttaqîn bi Sharh Ihyâ’ ‘Ulûm ad-Dîn*”. These sayings of his portray the extent of his knowledge, his perception and his deep understanding.

The light of knowledge is not concealed from the hearts because of miserliness and stinginess from the true giver [Allâh]. Rather it is concealed because of the filth, dirt and preoccupation that is in the hearts. This is because hearts are like containers. As long as they are filled with water, no air can get in. When the heart that is occupied with things apart from Allâh, recognition of His greatness cannot enter it.

Lustre of the hearts and eyes is acquired through remembrance [of Allâh]. And none can acquire this except those who have *taqwâ* (fear and consciousness of Allâh). So *taqwâ* is the door to remembrance. And

remembrance is the door to illumination. And illumination is the door to the supreme triumph.

The heart of a believer does not die. His knowledge does not become wiped out at the time of death. His purity does not become turbid. This is what al-Hasan referred to when he said: “The soil does not devour the place of îmân.”

As long as you see the '*ulamâ*' differing with each other, harbouring jealousy towards each other and are not friendly with each other, you should know that they have purchased this worldly life in exchange for the hereafter. And so, they are losers.

The most foolish of people is he who has the strongest belief with regard to his own virtue. The person with the firmest intelligence is the one who rebukes his self the most.

As long as you see a person harbouring evil thoughts about Allâh, and looking for faults, you should know that he is internally vile. On the other hand, a true believer has a clear heart with regard to the entire creation.

The reality of remembrance [of Allâh] cannot be realized in the heart except after inhabiting it with *taqwâ* and purifying it from reproachable traits. If not, this remembrance will merely be [like a person] speaking to himself. This has no power over the heart nor can it repulse Satan.

Just as your supplications are not answered because the prerequisites of supplication are not present, in like manner you remember Allâh and Satan does not flee from you because the prerequisites of remembrance are not present.

If the soul is not stopped from some of the lawful things, it will desire the unlawful things.

Total happiness lies in a person having control over his soul. And wretchedness lies in his soul having control over him.

The person who habituates his self in pondering over the majesty and greatness of Allâh and the kingdom of His earth and sky, this will become more enjoyable to him than every other single bounty. This enjoyment in the astonishing things about His kingdom will be forever. It will be even more enjoyable than the enjoyment of looking at the fruits and gardens of Paradise with his open eyes. If this is the condition of such persons in this world, what do you think will be their state when the veil is removed in the hereafter [and they are able to see Allâh]?

At the time of death, only three qualities remain with a person: (1) Purity of the heart. By this I mean, its purity from the filth of this world. (2) His attachment to the remembrance of Allâh. (3) His love for Allâh. Purity of the heart can only be attained by abstaining from the desires of this world. Attachment to the remembrance of Allâh can only be attained by engaging in excessive remembrance of Allâh. Love for Allâh can only be attained by recognition [of Allâh]. This recognition can only be attained by constant reflection.

The '*ulamâ*' of the hereafter are recognized by their marks of tranquillity, submission and humility. As for being loud-mouthed, constantly laughing, anger and fury in one's actions and speech – these are all the results of arrogance and negligence. And these are the ways of those who are engrossed in this worldly life.

Al-Ghazzâlî made an extraordinary supplication which people of cognition experienced at the time of poverty. The supplication is as follows:

اَللّٰهُمَّ يَا غَنِيَّ، يَا حَمِيْدٌ، يَا مُبْدِيَّ، يَا مُعِيْدٌ، يَا رَحِيْمٌ،
يَا وَدُوْدٌ، اَغْنِنِيْ بِحَالِكَ عَنْ حَرَامِكَ، وَبِطَاعَتِكَ
عَنْ مَعْصِيَتِكَ، وَبِفَضْلِكَ عَنْ سِوَاكَ.

“O Allâh! O You who are rich! O You who are praiseworthy! O You who initiates! O You who causes to return! O You who are merciful! O You who are loving! Let me suffice with the lawful which You provided me so that I have no need for the unlawful. Let me suffice with Your obedience so that I

have no need to disobey You. And through Your grace, make me independent of all apart from You.”

Al-Ghazzâlî said: “Whoever makes this supplication after the Friday prayer and remains constant in this supplication, Allâh will make him independent of His creation and provide him with sustenance from sources which he did not even imagine.”

Al-Ghazzâlî wrote many books. The most important of them being the following:

Ihyâ ‘Ulûm ad-Dîn.

Maqâsid al-Falâsifah.

Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalâl wa al-Mufsih ‘an al-Ahwâl.

Mukâshafah al-Qulûb al-Muqarrib ilâ Hadrâh ‘Allâm al-Ghuyûb.

This last book is the one that is before us at present. It is a book that is extremely beneficial. It explains for the people the virtues of deeds, morals and all other acts of obedience. We ask Allâh to benefit thereby His servants and to reform thereby their condition. Allâh alone is the guide towards the straight path. And all praise is due to Allâh alone.

Muhammad Rashîd Qubbânî.



All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ who meticulously planned the universe, who created the earth and the heavens, who sent down water from the clouds, who caused seeds and plants to grow, who apportioned the sustenance and provisions, and who rewarded for good deeds. Salutations and peace on our leader Muhammad, who came with manifest miracles, and from whose effulgence the universe acquired existence.

This is a book which I condensed from the unique and beautiful book titled *Mukâshafah al-Qulûb al-Muqarrib ilâ Allâm al-Ghuyûb*, which is attributed to Shaykh al-Ghazzâlî. I gave it the same title as the original. I seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from polytheism and sins. I condensed this book into 111 chapters so that the people of knowledge and understanding may remember what it contains.

ON FEAR

It is stated in a Tradition from the Prophet ﷺ that he said: “Allâh created an angel having a wing extending till the east and a wing extending till the west. Its head is beneath the throne [of Allâh] while its legs are beneath the seventh earth. It has feathers equal to the number of the creation of Allâh. When a man or woman from my *ummah* sends salutations to me, Allâh commands this angel to dive in an ocean of light which is beneath the throne. It dives into this ocean and then comes out. It then flaps its wings, and so a drop [of water] falls from each and every feather. Allâh then creates from every drop, an angel who seeks forgiveness for him [who sent salutations upon me] till the day of resurrection.”

Some wise men have said that the soundness of the body lies in less food, the soundness of the soul lies in abstaining from sins and the soundness of one's Islam lies in sending salutations to the best of the creation [Muhammad].

Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ

“O you who believe! Fear Allâh, and a soul should be mindful of what it has sent forth for tomorrow.”

In other words, what deeds it has done for the day resurrection. This means that you should firmly believe and do acts of obedience so that you may get the reward thereof on the day of resurrection.

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

“And fear Allâh, for surely Allâh is fully aware of all that you do.” (Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 18) – be it good or evil.

This is because the angels, the skies, the earth, the night and the day will all bear testimony on the day of resurrection as regards what man did – be it good or evil, acts of obedience or acts of disobedience. So much so that even his body parts will bear testimony against him. The earth will bear testimony in favour of a believer and ascetic person. The earth will say: “He offered salâh on me, he kept fast, he performed the pilgrimage, he waged jihâd.” On hearing this, the believer and ascetic person will be overjoyed.

The earth will also bear testimony against the unbeliever and sinner. It will say: “He performed acts of polytheism on me, he committed adultery, he consumed intoxicants, he consumed the unlawful.” O destruction on such a person if the most Merciful of those who show mercy were to interrogate him in the accounting of his deeds.

A true believer is he who fears Allâh with every part of his body. The jurist Abû al-Layth said: “An indication of fear of Allâh manifests itself in seven things.

(1) His tongue which prevents him from lying, backbiting, slander, false accusation and vain talk. At the same time, it keeps him preoccupied in the remembrance of Allâh, the recitation of the Qur’ân and acquisition of knowledge.

(2) His heart from which enmity, slander and jealousy towards one’s fellow brothers comes out. This is because jealousy wipes out good deeds.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘Jealousy devours good deeds just as the fire devours fire wood.’

You should know that jealousy is from among the major ailments in the hearts. And the ailments of the hearts cannot be treated except through knowledge and practising on that knowledge.

(3) His eyes. He should therefore not look at the unlawful be it of food, drink, clothing and other things. He should neither look at this world with desire. Rather, when he looks at this world, it should be by way of contemplation. He should neither look at those things that are unlawful to him.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘He who fills his eyes with the unlawful, Allâh will fill his eyes on the day of resurrection with the fire.’

(4) His stomach. Nothing unlawful should go into his stomach, for this is a major sin. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘When a morsel of unlawful food goes into the stomach of a person, every angel in the earth and heaven curses him as long as that morsel remains in his stomach. If he dies in that state, his abode is Hell.’

(5) His hand. He should therefore not extend his hand towards anything that is unlawful. Rather, he should extend it towards all that entails the obedience of Allâh. It is narrated from Ka‘b al-Ahbâr that he said: ‘Allâh created a mansion of green chrysolite. This mansion has 70 000 houses and each house has 70 000 dwellings. None shall enter this mansion except he to whom the unlawful was offered but he shuns it out of the fear of Allâh.’

(6) His feet. He should therefore not walk towards the disobedience of Allâh. He should rather walk towards the obedience and pleasure of Allâh. And towards sitting in the company of the *‘ulamâ’* and the righteous servants of Allâh.

(7) His obedience. His obedience should be solely for the sake of Allâh. He should fear showing off and hypocrisy. If he does all this, he will be from among those regarding whom Allâh said: ‘The hereafter with your Sustainer is for those who constantly fear Him.’ [11] He says in another verse: ‘Those who constantly fear Him shall be in gardens and fountains.’ [12] He says: ‘Those who constantly fear Him shall be in gardens and bliss.’ [13] He says: ‘Those who constantly fear Him shall be in a place of security.’ [14] It is as though Allâh is saying that on the day of resurrection they will be saved from the fire. It is the duty of a believer to possess both fear and hope. He should therefore hope for the mercy of Allâh and should not despair of it. Allâh says: ‘Do not despair of the mercy of Allâh.’ [15] He should worship Allâh, abstain from his evil deeds and repent to Allâh.

While Dâ’ûd عليه السلام was sitting in his hermitage reciting the Zabûr, he saw a red insect in the ground. He thus thought to himself: “What was the purpose of Allâh in creating this insect?” Allâh gave this insect the power to speak

and so it said: “O Prophet of Allâh! As for my days, my Sustainer has inspired me to say:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

“Glory to Allâh. All praise to Allâh. There is none worthy of worship but Allâh. Allâh is the greatest.”

A thousand times each day. As for my nights, my Sustainer has inspired me to say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ الْاُمِّيِّ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ

“O Allâh! Send salutations and peace on Muhammad, the unlettered Prophet, his family and his Companions.”

A thousand times each night. As for you, what do you say whereby I could benefit from you?” Dâ’ûd عليه السلام regretted considering this insect as insignificant. He feared Allâh, repented to Him and placed his trust in Him.

When Ibrâhîm عليه السلام used to think of his mistakes, he would fall unconscious and the trembling of his heart would be heard for one square mile. Allâh سبحانه sent Jibra’îl عليه السلام to him. The latter went to him and said: “The almighty [Allâh] conveys peace to you and says: ‘Have you seen a bosom friend fearing his bosom friend?’ [Ibrâhîm عليه السلام] replied: ‘O Jibra’îl! When I think of my mistakes and I ponder over the consequences thereof, I forget about my friendship [with Allâh].’”

These are the conditions and states of the Prophets, the friends of Allâh, the righteous people and those who have renounced this world. Ponder and reflect over this.

ALSO ON THE FEAR OF ALLÂH I

Abû al-Layth *rahmatullâhi 'alayh* said: “Allâh has angels in the seven heavens who are in prostration since the very time Allâh created them [and they will continue to be in prostration] till the day of resurrection. Violent fear seizes them from merely thinking about acting against the orders of Allâh ﷻ. On the day of resurrection they will raise their heads and say: “Glory be to You! We did not worship You as we ought to have worshipped You.” This is a manifestation of Allâh’s words:

يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

“They fear their Sustainer from above them and they carry out whatever they are ordered.” (Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 50)

In other words, they do not disobey Allâh ﷻ even for the blink of an eye. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When the body of a person trembles out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ, sins fall off him just as leaves fall off a tree.”

It is related that a person’s heart became attached to a woman. This woman came out for some work of hers. This man went with her. When he was in solitude with her in the jungle and the people were all asleep, the man expressed his secret [of loving her] to her. So the woman said to him: “Go and see if all the people have fallen asleep.” The man was overjoyed by her words and thought that she had accepted him. He therefore went and checked around the entire residential area. He saw that all the people were asleep. He returned to her and informed her that all the people were in fact sleeping. She said to him: “What do you have to say about Allâh ﷻ. Is He sleeping at this hour?” The man replied: “Allâh ﷻ does not sleep. Neither does slumber nor sleep overtake Him.” So the woman said: “Surely He who never slept and never sleeps is watching us even if people do not see us. He is therefore more deserving of being feared.” The man then left her out of fear of the Creator. He repented and returned to his land. When he passed

away, someone saw him in a dream and asked him: “What did Allâh ﷻ do to you?” He replied: “Allâh forgave me because of my fear [of Him] and because of my leaving that sin.”

There was a pious man in the Banî Isrâ’îl who had many children. He was afflicted by poverty and was reduced to compulsion. He therefore sent his wife in search of something for her children. She went to the house of a businessman and asked him for something which she could feed her children. The man replied: “Yes, [I will give you something], but will you agree to have intercourse with me?” The woman remained silent and returned to her house. She saw her children screaming out and saying: “O our mother! We are going to die out of hunger. Give us something to eat.” So she went back to the businessman and informed him about her children. He said to her: “Will my wish be fulfilled?” She replied: “Yes.” When he went in privacy with her, she began trembling with such force that her limbs were on the verge of coming out of their joints. So he asked her: “What is wrong with you?” She replied: “I fear Allâh.” The man said: “You are fearing Allâh despite the poverty which you are experiencing. I have a greater duty to fear Allâh than you.” And so he abstained from her and gave her whatever she needed. She returned with lots of goods to her children. On seeing all this, they were overjoyed. Allâh ﷻ then inspired Mûsâ ﷺ saying: “Go to such and such person and inform him that I have forgiven him his sins.” Mûsâ ﷺ went to him and said: “You probably did some good which is only known to you and Allâh.” The man then related his story to Mûsâ ﷺ. The latter said to him: “Surely Allâh ﷻ has forgiven you all your sins.”

It is reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said: Allâh ﷻ says: “I do not combine two forms of fear and two forms of peace for My servant. The one who fears Me in this world, I give him peace in the hereafter. The one who does not fear Me in this world, I cause him to fear on the day of resurrection.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَخَشَوُني

“Do not fear people, but fear Me.” (Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 44)

He says in another verse:

وَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُوا مِنِّي إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“Do not fear them but fear Me if you are truly believers.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 175)

‘Umar رضي الله عنه used to fall down unconscious out of fear when he would hear a verse from the Qur’ân. One day he took a straw of grass and said: “If only I was a straw of grass and I was not worthy of any mention. If only my mother did not give birth to me. He would cry profusely to the extent that his tears would flow from his eyes. There were two streaks of black lines on his face due to excessive crying.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who cries out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ will not enter the fire until milk goes back into the teat.” [It is impossible for milk to go back into the teat.]

It is related in *Raqâ’iq al-Akhabâr* that a person will be brought on the day of resurrection and his evil deeds will be more [than his good deeds]. He will be ordered to be taken to the fire. One of his eye lashes will speak and say: “O my Sustainer! Your Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ, said: ‘Whoever cries out of the fear of Allâh, Allâh will make that eye unlawful to the fire.’ And I cried out of Your fear. Allâh ﷻ will forgive him and save him from the fire by the blessing of a single eye lash which used to cry out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ in this world. Jibra’îl will announce: “Such and such person gained salvation through a strand of hair.”

It is related in *Bidâyah al-Hidâyah* that on the day of resurrection, Hell will be brought while it will be sighing deeply. Every single nation will then bow down on its knees out of awe of Hell. Allâh ﷻ says: “You will see every nation sitting on its knees.” [16] In other words, every nation will be on its knees, summoned to give an account [of its deeds]. When they are brought before the fire, they will hear its fury and moaning. Its moaning

will be heard from a journey of 500 years. Every single person, even the Prophets, will say: “O what is going to happen to me, what is going to happen to me!?” Only the choice of Prophets [Muhammad ﷺ] will say: “O what is going to happen to my *ummah*, what is going to happen to my *ummah*?” A fire will then come out from Hell which will be as huge as mountains. The followers of Muhammad ﷺ will try to repulse it and they will say: “By the right of those who used to offer *salâh*, those who used to give in charity, those who used to fear, and those who used to keep fast, we order you to go back.” But it will not go back. Jibra’îl عليه السلام will call out: “The fire is going after the followers of Muhammad.” He will then bring a bucket of water and give it to the Messenger of Allâh and say: “O Messenger of Allâh! Take this and pour it onto the fire.” He will pour it and the fire will immediately subside. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ will then ask: “What water is this?” Jibra’îl عليه السلام will reply: “This water is the tears of the sinners from your *ummah* who cried out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ. I have just been commanded to give it to you to pour it onto the fire so that it may subside by the permission of Allâh ﷻ.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to make the following supplication: “O Allâh! Bless me with eyes that cry out of Your fear before a time when there are no tears.”

A poet says:

أعيني هلا تكيان على ذنبي - تنأثر عمري من يدي ولا أدري

“O my eyes! Why do you not cry over my sins. My life has slipped through my hands without even realizing it.”

It is related with regard to Muhammad ibn al-Mundhir *rahimahullâh* that when he used to cry, he would wipe his face and beard with his tears, and say: “I have heard that the fire will not devour a place which tears have touched.” It is therefore the duty of a believer to fear the punishment of Allâh ﷻ and to stop his soul from base desires. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَىٰ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ،
وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَىٰ النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

“As for he who transgressed and preferred the life of this world, Hell alone is his abode. As for he who feared standing before his Sustainer and stopped his soul from desires, then Paradise alone is his abode.”(Sûrah an-Nâzi‘ât, 79: 37-41)

The one who desires to be saved from the punishment of Allâh ﷻ and to acquire His reward and mercy should bear patiently the hardships of this world, he should patiently obey Allâh ﷻ and abstain from sins.

It is related in *Zahr ar-Riyâd* that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, the angels meet them with every type of good and bounty. Minarets are placed before them and carpets are laid out. Various types of food and fruits are brought for them. Together with these bounties will be the damsels of Paradise. Allâh ﷻ will say: “O My servants! What are these damsels when this is not the place for them?” They will all reply: “We were made a promise, and its time has come.” Allâh ﷻ will then say to the angels: “Raise the veils from the faces.” The angels will ask: “O our Sustainer! How can they see You when they were sinners?!” Allâh ﷻ will reply: “Raise the veils for they were certainly those who engaged in [My] remembrance, who prostrated [before Me], who cried in the world out of desire to meet Me.” The veils will be raised, they will look and immediately fall into prostration before Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ will say to them: “Raise your heads for this is not the place for doing deeds. This is the place of conferring honour.” Allâh ﷻ will then appear before them and say to them with delight: “Peace be on you O My servants! I am pleased with you. Are you pleased with Me?” They will reply: “Why should we not be pleased with You when You have given us that which no eye has ever seen, that which no ear has ever heard of, and that which no heart has even thought about?” This is what is meant by the words of Allâh ﷻ: “Allâh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him.” [17] And the words: “Peace! A greeting from a Merciful Sustainer.” [18]

ON PATIENCE AND ILLNESS

The person who wants to save himself from the punishment of Allâh and gain His reward and mercy, and enter His Paradise should restrain his soul from worldly desires, and exercise patience over the difficulties and hardships of this world. Allâh ﷻ says: “Surely Allâh loves those who are patient.”^[19] Patience is of different types: patience in the obedience of Allâh, patience in abstaining from His prohibitions, patience at the time of an affliction, patience at the very beginning of an affliction. The person who exercises patience in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ, then on the day of resurrection Allâh ﷻ shall give him 300 stages in Paradise, the distance between each stage being equal to the distance between the earth and the heavens. The person who exercises patience in abstaining from the prohibitions of Allâh ﷻ, then on the day of resurrection Allâh ﷻ shall give him 600 stages, the distance between each stage being equal to the distance between the seventh heaven and the seventh earth. The person who exercises patience over an affliction, then on the day of resurrection Allâh ﷻ shall give him 700 stages in Paradise, the distance between each stage being equal to the distance between the throne [of Allâh] and the ground.

It is reported from the Prophet ﷺ that Allâh ﷻ says: “When a servant is afflicted by a calamity and he turns to Me, I shall give him before he even asks Me, and I shall accept his supplication even before he supplicates to Me. And when a servant is afflicted by a calamity and he turns to the creation to My exclusion, I shall shut the gates of the heavens upon him.” It is therefore incumbent on an intelligent person to exercise patience on an affliction and to abstain from complaining. In so doing, he will save himself from the punishment of this world and of the hereafter. This is because the greatest calamities and afflictions befell the Prophets and the friends of Allâh ﷻ.

Junayd Baghdâdî *rahimahullâh* said: “A calamity is the light for those who have recognized Allâh ﷻ, an awakening for those who desire Him, a

source of righteousness for the believers, and a source of destruction for those who are negligent of Allâh ﷻ. None will experience the sweetness of îmân until calamity afflicts him, he is pleased with it and he exercises patience over it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who falls ill for a single night and remains patient [over this illness] and is pleased with [this decree] of Allâh ﷻ shall come out of his sins as the day his mother gave birth to him. Therefore if any of you falls ill, you should not hope for well-being.”

Ad-Dahhâk *rahimahullâh* said: “A person who is not put through a test either by some affliction, worry or calamity every forty days, then there is no good for him in the sight of Allâh ﷻ.”

Mu ‘âdh ibn Jabal ؓ said: “When Allâh ﷻ tests a believing servant with illness, He says to the angel on his left, “stop recording his [evil] deeds” and He says to the angel on his right: ‘Record all the best deeds that he used to do [when he was sound and healthy].’”

It is stated that the Prophet ﷺ said: “When the servant of Allâh ﷻ falls ill, Allâh ﷻ sends two angels to him and says to them: ‘Go and see what My servant is saying.’ If he says ‘all praise is due to Allâh’, that is conveyed to Allâh ﷻ although He is fully aware of what he said. Allâh ﷻ then says: ‘I have taken it upon Myself that if I cause this servant of Mine to die, I will admit him into Paradise. And if I cure him, I will give him flesh better than what he has, and blood better than what he has, and I will forgive him his sins.’”

It is related that there was a very sinful person among the Banî Isrâ’îl. He refused to abstain from his sins and acts of disobedience to such an extent that the people of his town got tired and fed up with him. And they were unable to stop him from these practices of his. And so they supplicated and beseeched Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ inspired Mûsâ ؑ informing him thus: “There is a sinful youngster among the Banî Isrâ’îl. Expel him from their town so that the fire does not afflict them because of his sins.” Mûsâ ؑ

came and expelled him [from that town]. This youth then went to another village. Allâh ﷻ ordered Mûsâ ﷺ to expel him from that village as well. Mûsâ ﷺ expelled him again. So he went to a desert where there was no one living – no vegetation, no animals, no birds, nothing at all. This person then fell ill in that deserted place. He had no one to come to his assistance. He fell to the ground and placed his head on the soil. He then said: “If my mother was present by my head, she would have had mercy on me and she would have cried at my disgrace. If my father was present, he would have helped me and seen to my affairs. If my wife was present, she would have cried at being separated from me. If my children were present, they would have cried behind my funeral bier and they would have said: ‘O Allâh! Forgive our poor, weak, sinful and disobedient father who was expelled from his town to a village and from the village to a desert, and from this desert he is leaving this world to go to the hereafter totally despondent.’ O Allâh! You have cut me off from my parents, my children and my wife. Now do not cut me off from Your mercy. You have burnt my heart by separating them from me. Now do not burn me with Your fire because of my sins.’ So Allâh ﷻ sent a woman of Paradise in the form of his mother, a woman of Paradise in the form of his wife, young boys in the form of his sons and an angel in the form of his father. They all came and sat around him and cried over him. On seeing this, he said: ‘This is my father, my mother, my wife and my children who have come to see me.’ He feels very contented at this and is conveyed to the mercy of Allâh ﷻ – completely pure and forgiven of all his sins. Allâh ﷻ then inspired Mûsâ ﷺ saying to him: ‘Go to such and such desert, to such and such spot, for one of My close friends has passed away. Go to him, see to his affairs and bury him.’ When Mûsâ ﷺ reaches that spot, he sees the very same youngster whom he had expelled from the town and then from the village by the order of Allâh ﷻ. And he sees the women of Paradise sitting around him. On seeing all this, Mûsâ ﷺ says: ‘O Allâh! Is this not the very same person whom I had expelled from the town and then from the village by Your order?!’ Allâh ﷻ replies: ‘O Mûsâ! I had mercy on him and forgave him because of his crying and moaning at that spot, and because of his exile from his town, his mother, his father, his children and his wife. And I sent a woman of Paradise in the form of his mother, an angel in the form of his father, and a

woman of Paradise in the form of his wife so that they may all seek mercy over his disgrace during this exile of his. For surely when an exiled person passes away, the people of the heavens and the earth cry over him out of mercy for him. So how can I not show mercy to him when I am the most Merciful of those who show mercy?”

When an exiled person is in the throes of death, Allâh ﷻ says: “O My angels! This exiled person and traveller has left his children, his family, his parents. When he dies, there will be no one to cry and grieve over him.”

Allâh ﷻ then makes one of the angels in the form of his father, one in the form of his mother, one in the form of his child, one in the form of one of his relatives. They all go to him. He opens his eyes and sees his parents and relatives. He is thus heartened by this and his soul leaves him with joy and happiness. Then when his funeral bier is carried, they walk behind it and they supplicate in his favour at his graveside till the day of resurrection. This is the meaning of the words of Allâh ﷻ: “Allâh is extremely kind to His servants.” [\[20\]](#)

Ibn Atâ *rahimahullâh* said: The sincerity or insincerity of a person becomes clear during times of affliction and times of prosperity. The person who is grateful during times of prosperity and sorrowful during times of affliction is a liar [and insincere person]. If a person has all the knowledge of the entire human race and of the jinn, and thereafter the winds of affliction blow upon him and he complains over what has afflicted him, then neither his knowledge nor his deeds will help him in any way.

It is stated in a Hadîth Qudsî that Allâh ﷻ says: “The person who is not pleased with My decision and is not grateful for what I have bestowed upon him should look for a Lord apart from Me.”

Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullâh* narrates that a Prophet worshipped Allâh ﷻ for 50 years. So Allâh ﷻ inspired to him saying: “I have certainly forgiven you.” He asked Allâh ﷻ: “O my Sustainer! Why are you forgiving me when I have never committed a sin?” So Allâh ﷻ ordered a vein of his to palpitate fiercely. Consequently, he did not sleep that night. When the morning angel came to him, he complained to him about the

palpitation of his vein. The angel replied: “Your Sustainer says to you that your worship of 50 years does not equal this complaint about this vein of yours.”

ON SPIRITUAL EXERCISE AND BASE DESIRES

Allâh ﷻ inspired to Mûsâ ﷺ saying: O Mûsâ! If you desire that I be closer to you than your speech is to your tongue, and the whispering of your heart is to your heart, and your soul is to your body, and your sight is to your eyes and your hearing is to your ears, then send excessive salutations to Muhammad ﷺ. Allâh ﷻ says: “A soul should see what it has sent forward for tomorrow.” [\[21\]](#) In other words, what deeds it has done for the day of resurrection.

O man! You should know that the soul that has been commanded to evil is a greater enemy to you than Satan and that Satan gets the upper hand over you through the whims and desires of the soul. Your soul should therefore not delude you with false hopes and deception. This is because the nature of the soul is to feel self-satisfied, to be negligent, to enjoy rest, idleness and laziness. Its invitation is therefore baseless and everything from it is a deception. If you are pleased with it and follow its dictates, you will be destroyed. If you are negligent in taking it to account, you will drown. If you are unable to act against it and follow its desires, it will drive you towards the fire. There is no return for the soul towards good. It is the head of trials and tribulations, the mine of disgrace, the treasure house of Satan, and the source of every evil. None but its Creator truly knows it. Fear Allâh ﷻ for surely Allâh knows all that you do. In other words, be it good or evil. When a servant ponders over his life that has passed in search of his hereafter, this pondering will be a cleansing of the heart.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Pondering for a little while is better than a year’s worship.” As stated in the *Tafsîr* of Abû al-Layth. It is therefore the duty of an intelligent person to repent from past sins and to ponder over those things that will take him closer [to Allâh ﷻ] and with which he will gain salvation in the hereafter. He should also curtail all his hopes, hasten in repentance, engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, abstain from the prohibitions, impose himself to patience, and abstain from following the

desires of the soul. This is because the soul is an idol. The one who worships the soul is actually worshipping an idol. And the person who worships Allâh ﷻ with devotion, he is the one who has subjugated his soul.

It is related that Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* was walking in the market-place of Basra. He saw some figs and desired to eat them. He took out his shoes, gave them to the green-grocer and said to him: "Give me the figs." The green-grocer looked at the shoes and said that they are not worth anything. So Mâlik continued on his way. Someone said to the green-grocer: "Don't you know who that was?" He replied: "No." When he was informed that it was Mâlik ibn Dînâr, the green-grocer placed the basket [of figs] onto the head of his slave and said to him: "If he [Mâlik] accepts this from you, I will free you." The slave ran behind Mâlik ibn Dînâr and said to him: "Accept this from me." But he refused to accept it. The slave said: "Accept it because your acceptance will buy my freedom." Mâlik ibn Dînâr replied: "I took an oath that I will not sell my Islam for figs and that I will not eat figs till the day of reckoning."

It is related that Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* fell ill, which eventually caused his death. He desired to have a bowl of honey and milk so that he could dip hot bread into it. His servant went and brought it for him. Mâlik ibn Dînâr took it, looked at it for quite some time and said: "O my soul! You remained patient for 30 years. There is just one hour of your life left now." He threw the bowl from his hands, exercised patience and passed away. This is the condition of the Prophets, the friends of Allâh, the truthful ones, those who love Allâh ﷻ, and those who renounce the pleasures of this world.

Sulaymân عليه السلام, the son of Dâ'ûd عليه السلام said: "The one who subjugates his soul is more stronger than the person who conquers a city all by himself."

‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib عليه السلام said: "Me and my soul are just like a shepherd. Every time a shepherd herds his flock from one side, they begin spreading out from the other side. The person who kills his soul will be enshrouded with the shroud of mercy and buried in the land of honour. And the one who kills

his heart will die in the shroud of curse and buried in the land of chastisement.”

Yahyâ ibn Mu‘âdh ar-Râzî *rahimahullâh* said: “Endeavour against your soul through obedience and spiritual exercise. Spiritual exercise entails sleeping less, speaking less, bearing the insults of people and eating less. Less sleep creates purity in intentions. Speaking less creates security from hardships. Bearing the insults of people enables you to reach your goals. And eating less causes the death of your desires. This is because excessive eating causes the heart to become hard and to lose its lustre. The light of wisdom is in hunger while eating to one’s fill causes one to go further away from Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Illuminate your hearts through hunger, fight against your souls through hunger and thirst, and constantly knock on the door of Paradise through hunger. This is because the reward for this is equal to the reward of a person striving in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. There is no deed more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than hunger and thirst. The person who fills his stomach and loses the sweetness of the different acts of worship will never enter the kingdom of the heavens.”

Abû Bakr as-Siddîq ؓ said: “I never ate to my fill from the time I embraced Islam so that I may experience the sweetness of worshipping my Sustainer. And I never quenched by thirst from the time I embraced Islam out of my desire to meet my Sustainer. This is because excessive eating causes decrease in worship. This is because when a person eats excessively, his body feels heavy, sleep overtakes him and his limbs become lazy. He therefore cannot do anything even if he tries hard to do so. The only thing he can do is sleep. He thus becomes like a corpse that has been flung down.” As stated in *Minhâj al-‘Âbidîn*.

It is stated that Luqmân, the wise, said to his son: “Do not sleep too much nor eat too much. For the person who does both excessively will come on the day of resurrection devoid of good deeds.” As stated in *Munyah al-Muftî*.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not kill the hearts through excessive eating and drinking. This is because the heart dies like a plant when it is watered excessively.”

Some righteous people have likened this by saying that the stomach is like a pot beneath the heart. When this pot boils, the steam reaches the heart. Too much of steam [and smoke] blackens the heart and makes it filthy. Excessive eating causes less understanding and less knowledge. This is because gluttony removes intelligence.

It is related that Satan appeared before Yahyâ ؑ, the son of Zakariyyâ ؑ. Satan had plucks of animals on his body. Yahyâ ؑ asked him: “What is this?” He replied: “These are base desires through which I hunt man.” Yahyâ ؑ asked him: “Do you find any of these on me?” He replied: “No. However, one night you ate to your fill and so we made it too heavy for you to offer salâh.” Yahyâ ؑ said: “I will certainly never eat to my fill again.” Satan said: “I will certainly not advise anyone again.”

This is the condition of a person who never ate to his fill throughout his life except for one night. What can be said of the person who never remained hungry in his life and yet desires to worship Allâh ﷻ?!!

It is also related that one night Yahyâ ؑ, the son of Zakariyyâ ؑ, ate barley bread to his fill. He therefore missed his worship of that night. Allâh ﷻ said to him: “O Yahyâ! Did you find a house better for you than My house? Did you find protection better for you than My protection?...I take an oath by My honour and My grandeur, if you were to merely take a peek at Paradise and Hell, you will shed pus instead of tears, and you will wear steel instead of course woollen clothes.”

ON THE SUBJUGATION OF THE SOUL AND THE ENMITY OF SATAN

It is the duty of an intelligent person to overpower the desire of the soul with hunger. This is because hunger results in subjugating the enemy of Allâh ﷻ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Satan flows in the body of man just as blood flows in his body. So constrict his passage ways with hunger.” The closest to Allâh ﷻ on the day of resurrection is he who remained hungry and thirsty for lengthy periods. The greatest cause of destruction for man is the desire of the stomach. It was because of this that Âdam ﷺ and Hawwâ ﷺ were removed from an abode of stability to an abode of humiliation and poverty when Allâh ﷻ prohibited them from eating from a particular tree. It was their desire that overpowered them to such an extent that they ate thereof and their private parts thereby became exposed. The stomach in reality is the fountain of desires.

Some wise people have said that the person whose soul overpowers him becomes a prisoner in the love of its desires, confined in the prison of its sins, and it prevents his heart from benefits. The person who irrigates the land of the limbs with desires has in fact planted in his heart the tree of remorse.

Allâh ﷻ created the creation under three categories. (1) He created the angels, gave them intelligence but did not give them desires. (2) He created animals, gave them desires but did not give them intelligence. (3) He created humans and gave them intelligence and desires. So the person whose desires overpower his intelligence, then animals are better than him. And the person who intelligence overpowers his desires, then he is better than angels.

Ibrâhîm al-Khawwâs said: I was near Mt. Lukkâm when I saw a pomegranate. I desired to have one and so I took one. When I split it [and ate some], I found it to be sour. I continued on my way and left the

pomegranate aside. I then saw a man fallen to the ground with hornets on him. I said to him: “Peace be on you.” He replied: “Peace be on you as well, O Ibrâhîm.” I asked him: “From where do you know me?” He replied: “When a person recognizes Allâh ﷻ, nothing remains concealed from him.” I said to him: “I see you enjoy a special status with Allâh ﷻ. So why do you not ask Him to save you from these hornets?” He replied: “I see you also enjoy a special status with Allâh ﷻ. So why do you not ask him to save you from your desire for pomegranates? The desire for pomegranates is such that the person will experience its pain in the hereafter. As for the stinging of hornets, the pain of this is experienced in this world. The stinging of hornets is on the souls while the stinging of desires is on the hearts.” I then continued and left him.

Desires can reduce kings to slaves while patience can raise slaves to kings. Do you not ponder over the story of Yûsuf ﷺ and Zulaykhâ? Yûsuf ﷺ became the ruler of Egypt because of his patience. On the other hand, Zulaykhâ became disgraced and humiliated. And she was reduced to a poor, old blind woman because of her desire. This is because Zulaykhâ did not exercise patience over her love for Yûsuf ﷺ.

Abû al-Hasan ar-Râzî relates that he saw his father in his dream two years after the latter passed away. His father was wearing clothes of tar. So he said to him: “O my father! How is it that I see you wearing clothes of the inmates of Hell-fire?” He replied: “O my son! My soul dragged me towards the fire. O my son! You should therefore be on your guard from the deception of your soul:

إني ابتليت بأربع ما سلطوا - إلا لشدة شقوتي وعنائني
 إبليس والدنيا ونفسي والهوى - كيف الخلاص وكلهم أعدائي
 وأرى الهوى تدعو إليه خواطري - في ظلمة الشهوات والآراء

“I have been put through a test by four things. They gained the upper-hand because of my severe wretchedness and distress. These four things are Satan, the world, my soul and desires. How can I save myself when all of

them are my enemies? I see my thoughts and fantasies inviting towards desires in the darkness of desires and opinions.”

Hâtim al-Asamm *rahimahullâh* said: “My soul is my fort, my knowledge is my weapon, my sin is my loss, Satan is my enemy, while I myself am treacherous to my soul.”

A man who truly recognized Allâh ﷻ said: “Jihâd is of three types: (1) Jihâd against the unbelievers. This is the obvious and open jihâd as stated by Allâh ﷻ: ‘They wage jihâd in the cause of Allâh.’ [22] (2) Jihâd against the deviated people through knowledge and proof, as stated by Allâh ﷻ: ‘dispute with them in a manner that is best.’ [23] (3) Jihâd against the soul that always commands towards evil, as stated by Allâh ﷻ: ‘Those who strive for Our sake, We shall certainly guide them to Our paths.’ [24]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘The best form of jihâd is jihâd against the soul.’ When the Companions used to return from waging jihâd against the unbelievers, they would say: ‘We have returned from a minor jihâd to a major jihâd.’ They labelled jihâd against desires, the soul and Satan a major jihâd because jihâd against them is continuous. On the other hand, jihâd against the unbelievers is applicable at certain times and not applicable at others. Furthermore, the *mujâhid* sees his enemy while he does not see Satan. Jihâd against an enemy which he can see is easier against an enemy which he cannot see. The other reason is the Satan has help from your soul while the unbeliever does not have help from your soul. Jihâd against Satan is therefore more difficult. Another reason is that if you kill an unbeliever, you will receive victory and booty. If the unbeliever kills you, you will receive martyrdom and Paradise. On the other hand, you are unable to kill Satan. And if Satan kills you, you will fall into the chastisement and punishment of Allâh ﷻ. As the saying goes: “The person whose horse flees from him in the battlefield falls into the hands of the unbelievers. And the person whose îman flees from him falls into the wrath of the Almighty Allâh.” We seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from this.

The person who falls into the hands of the unbelievers does not have his hands tied to his neck, nor are his feet fettered, nor does his stomach go

hungry, nor does his body go naked. As for the person who falls into the wrath of the Almighty, his face becomes black, his hands are tied to his neck with chains, his feet are fettered with chains of fire, his food is the fire, his drink is the fire, and his clothes are of fire.

ON NEGLIGENCE AND INATTENTION

Negligence increases remorse. Negligence removes bounties and comes as a barrier in fulfilling service [to Allâh ﷻ]. Negligence increases jealousy. Negligence increases rebuke and regret.

It is related that a pious person saw his teacher in his dream and so he asked him: “What is your greatest remorse?” The teacher replied: “The remorse of negligence.”

It is related that a pious person saw Dhû an-Nûn Misrî *rahimahullâh* in his dream so he asked him: “What did Allâh ﷻ do to you?” He replied: “He made me stand before Him and said to me: ‘O you who used to claim! O liar! You claimed to love Me but then you became unmindful of me?’”

A poet says:

أنت في غفلة وقلبك ساهي - ذهب العمر والذنوب كما هي

“You are in negligence and your heart is inattentive. Your entire life has passed while your sins are still the same.”

It is related that a pious man saw his father in his dream so he asked him: “O my father! How are you and what condition are you in?” He replied: “O my son! We lived in the world in a state of negligence and we died in a state of negligence.”

It is stated in *Zahr ar-Riyâd* that Ya‘qûb عليه السلام was friendly with the angel of death. One day the latter came to visit him so Ya‘qûb عليه السلام asked him: “O angel of death! Have you come to visit me or have you come to take my life away?” He replied: “I have come to visit you.” Ya‘qûb عليه السلام said to him: “I am asking you for one favour.” He asked: “And what is that?” Ya‘qûb عليه السلام said: “You must inform me when my time draws near and you decide to

take away my life.” He replied: “Okay, I will send you two or three messengers.” Then when his time came to an end, the angel of death came to him. Ya‘qûb عليه السلام asked him: “Have you come to visit me or have you come to take my life away?” He replied: “I have come to take your life away.” Ya‘qûb عليه السلام asked him: “Did you not tell me that you will send two or three messengers to me [when my time comes to an end]?” The angel of death replied: “I had done that: your hair became grey after it was black. Your body became weak after it was strong. Your body became bent after it had been upright. O Ya‘qûb! These are my messengers whom I send to man before death [comes to them].”

A poet says:

مضى الدهر والأيام والذنوب حاصل – وجاء رسول الموت والقلب غافل
نعيمك في الدنيا غرور وحسرة – وعيشك في الدنيا محال وباطل

“Time and days have passed, and the sins have been committed. The messenger of death has come but the heart is still negligent. Your comforts in this world are a deception and a source of remorse. For you to live in this world forever is impossible and baseless.”

Abû Alî ad-Daqqâq *rahimahullâh* said: “I went to visit a pious man when he had fallen ill. He was a very senior teacher and his students were sitting around him while he was crying. He had reached an extremely old age. So I said to him: ‘O Shaykh! What is the reason for your crying? Is it over this world?’ He said: ‘Not at all. Rather I am crying over the fact that I missed my salâh.’ I said: ‘How can that be when you were regular in your salâh?’ He replied: ‘Because I remained this entire day without prostrating except in negligence and I raised my head [from prostration] in negligence. And here I am now dying in a state of negligence. He then heaved a deep sigh and began saying the following poem:

تفكرت في حشري ويوم قيامتي - وأصبح خدي في المقابر ثاوريا
فريدا وحيدا بعد عز ورفعة - رهينا بجرمي والتراب وساديا
تفكرت في طول الحساب وعرضه - وذل مقامي حين أعطى كتابيا
ولكن رجائي فيك ربّي وخالقي - بأنك تعفو يا إلهي خطائيا

“I pondered over my resurrection and my day of reckoning. The light of my cheek is lying prone in the grave. I am all alone and lonely after all the honour and status which I enjoyed. I am responsible for my sins and the soil is my pillow. I pondered over the lengthy reckoning [of deeds] and the presentation thereof. And my disgraceful position when I will be given my book of deeds. However, I have hope in You, my Sustainer and my Creator, that O my Allâh, You will forgive me my sins.”

It is mentioned in *‘Uyûn al-Akhabâr* that Shaqîq al-Balkhî *rahimahullâh* said: People make three statements which they are very used to in their actions: (1) They say “we are the slaves of Allâh” yet they do actions of free people. So this is contrary to their statement. (2) They say: “Allâh has guaranteed our sustenance.” Yet their hearts are only satisfied with this world and gathering all its vanities. This is also contrary to their statement. (3) They say: “It is inevitable for us to die.” Yet they do deeds of a person who is not going to die. This is also contrary to their statement. Therefore, my dear brother, you should think with which body you are going to stand before Allâh ﷻ, with which tongue you are going to answer Him, and what are you going to say when He questions you about every single thing – big and small. You should therefore prepare answers for the questions, and ensure that the answers are correct. Fear Allâh ﷻ for He is fully aware of all that you do – be it good or evil. Allâh then admonishes the believers that they should not abandon His orders and that they should believe in Him as one both in secrecy and in public.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “It is written on the side of the throne [of Allâh ﷻ]: I am obedient to the one who obeys me, I love the one who loves me, I accept the supplication of the one who supplicates to me, and I forgive the one who asks me for forgiveness.”

It is therefore the duty of an intelligent person to obey Allâh ﷻ with fear, with sincerity in obedience to Him, with being pleased with whatever He has decided, with being patient over whatever He afflicted him with, with being grateful over His bounties, and with being content with what He gives.

Allâh ﷻ says: “He who is not pleased with My decision, who is not patient over what I afflicted him with, who is not grateful over My bounties and who is not content with what I give him, then he should look for a Sustainer apart from Me.”

A person said to Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh*: “I do not experience any enjoyment in obedience [to Allâh ﷻ].” So he said to him: “You probably looked at someone who does not fear Allâh.” Worship demands that you abandon everything solely for Allâh ﷻ.

A person said to Abû Yazîd *rahimahullâh*: “I do not experience any enjoyment in obedience [to Allâh ﷻ].” So he said to him: “That is because you are worshipping [acts of] obedience and not worshipping Allâh ﷻ. Worship Allâh ﷻ so that you experience enjoyment in [acts of] obedience.”

It is related that a person commenced salâh and when he came to the words “You alone do we worship”, the thought crossed his mind that he is really worshipping Allâh ﷻ. An announcement was made in his heart: “You are lying. You are actually worshipping the creation.” So he repented and remained aloof from people. He then started his salâh again and when he came to the words “You alone do we worship”, an announcement was made: “You are lying. You are actually worshipping your wealth.” So he gave all his wealth in charity. He then started his salâh again and when he came to the words “You alone do we worship”, an announcement was made: “You are lying. You are actually worshipping your clothing.” So he gave all his clothes in charity except what he really needed. He then started his salâh again and when he came to the words “You alone do we worship”, an announcement was made: “Now you are speaking the truth. You are really worshipping your Sustainer.”

It is stated in *Raunaq al-Majâlis* that a person lost his saddle-bags and did not know who took them away from him. When he started offering his salâh, he remembered [who had them]. When he completed his salâh, he said to his slave: “Go to such and such person and ask him to return the saddle-bags.” His slave said to him: “When did you remember this?” He replied: “When I was in my salâh.” The slave said: “O my master! [when you were in salâh] you were seeking your saddle-bags, and you were not seeking the Creator.” His master freed him because of his firm belief.

It is therefore the duty of an intelligent person to leave this world and worship Allâh ﷻ. He should ponder over what lies before him and desire the hereafter.

Allâh ﷻ says: “He who desires the plantation of the hereafter, We give him more in his plantation. And he who desires the plantation of this world” [25], i.e. the pleasures of clothing, food and drink of this world, “We give him some of it and there is no share whatsoever for him in the hereafter.” [26] In the sense that love for the hereafter is removed from his heart. It is for this reason that Abû Bakr ؓ spent 40 000 dînârs on the Prophet ﷺ in secrecy and 40 000 dînârs in public – to the extent that there remained nothing with him. As for the Prophet ﷺ, he shunned the world, its desires and its pleasures – he and his family. It is for this reason that when the Prophet ﷺ got his daughter, Fâtimah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*, married to ‘Alî ؓ, her dowry was merely a tanned piece of sheep leather and a leather pillow whose filling was fibres.

ON FORGETTING ALLÂH, DISOBEDIENCE AND HYPOCRISY

A woman came to Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* and said: "I had a young daughter who passed away. I would like to see her in my dream. So I have come to you to teach me what I could resort to in order to see her." So he taught her and she saw her daughter in her dream: the daughter was wearing clothes of tar, there was an iron collar around her neck and fetters on her feet. The woman went and informed Hasan al-Basrî about this and he became very distressed over what he heard. After some time, Hasan al-Basrî saw her in Paradise with a crown on her head. She said: "O Hasan! Do you not know me? I am the daughter of the woman who came to you and told you certain things." He asked her: "What has caused you to become as I see you at present?" She replied: "A man passed by us and sent salutations to the Prophet ﷺ. There were 550 people in the graveyard who were being punished [the punishment of the grave]. So an announcement was made: "Remove the punishment from them by the blessing of the salutation of this person." On account of this one salutation of one person they received forgiveness. So won't the person who is sending salutations for the past fifty years receive intercession on the day of resurrection?"

Allâh ﷻ says: "Do not be like those who forgot Allâh." In other words, do not be in disobedience like the hypocrites who abandoned the orders of Allâh ﷻ, who acted against Him, who took enjoyment from the desires of this world and who were inclined towards its deception.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about a believer and a hypocrite. So he said: "The believer's main concern is in salâh and fasting. While the hypocrite's main concern is food and drink like an animal, abandoning worship and salâh. The believer is engrossed in charity and seeking forgiveness. While the hypocrite is engrossed in greed and hopes. The believer is despondent of everything but Allâh ﷻ while the hypocrite hopes from everyone but Allâh ﷻ. The believer sacrifices his wealth for his religion while the hypocrite sacrifices his religion for his wealth. The

believer feels safe from everyone but Allâh ﷻ while the hypocrite fears everyone but Allâh ﷻ. The believer does good but still cries [before Allâh ﷻ] while the hypocrite does evil yet he laughs [about it]. The believer loves to be alone and in solitude while the hypocrites loves to intermingle and be in company. The believer sows but fears destruction while the hypocrite uproots and hopes for a harvest. The believer commands and prohibits as a religious duty and he reforms, while the hypocrite commands and prohibits merely for leadership and he causes corruption. In fact, he commands evil and prohibits good. Allâh ﷻ says:

الْمُنْفِقُونَ وَالْمُنْفِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ ط تَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ ط
إِنَّ الْمُنْفِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُنْفِقِينَ وَالْمُنْفِقَاتِ
وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ط هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ ج
وَلَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ ج وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ

“The male hypocrites and the female hypocrites are all the same: they enjoin what is evil and prohibit what is good, and they close their hands. They forgot Allâh, so Allâh forgot them. Surely the hypocrites, it is they who are disobedient. Allâh has promised the male hypocrites, the female hypocrites and the unbelievers the fire of Hell, abiding therein. It is sufficient for them. Allâh has cursed them, and for them is a permanent punishment.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 67, 68)

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا

“Allâh shall gather the hypocrites and unbelievers in Hell all together.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 140)

This is if they died on their unbelief and hypocrisy. Allâh ﷻ mentioned the hypocrites first because they are worse than the unbelievers. And He made

the fire the abode of both groups. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ يَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا

“The hypocrites shall be in the lowest level of the fire and you will never find a helper for them.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 145)

The word منافق (hypocrite) is linguistically derived from the word نفاق البرع . It is said that the jerboa (a nocturnal rodent) burrows two holes in the ground. One is called النفاق and the other is called القاصعاء . This rodent portrays itself from one hole but exits from the other [thereby deluding its enemies]. It is for this reason that a hypocrite is called a *munâfiq* – he portrays himself as a Muslim but comes out of Islam towards unbelief.

A Hadîth states: “The hypocrite is like a sheep between two flocks of sheep. Sometimes it will graze with one flock and sometimes it will graze with the other flock. It is not at ease with either flocks because it is a stranger not belonging to either flock. Similar is the case of a hypocrite – he is not totally at ease with the Muslims nor with the unbelievers.”

Allâh ﷻ created the Hell-fire which has seven gates. Allâh ﷻ says: “It has seven gates.” [27] These gates are made of steel, with a layer of curse. Their outer surface is of copper while the under surface is of lead. There is punishment in its very essence while there is wrath above it. The ground of Hell-fire is of copper, glass, steel and lead. The fire is above the inmates of Hell and beneath them as well. The fire is also to their right and their left. Its levels are one above the other. Allâh ﷻ prepared the lowest level for the hypocrites.

It is stated in a Tradition that Jibra’îl عليه السلام came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ . The latter said to him: “O Jibra’îl! Describe the Hell-fire and its heat to me.” He replied: “Allâh ﷻ created the Hell-fire and kindled it for 1000 years until it became red. He then kindled it for another 1000 years until it turned white. He then kindled it for another 1000 years until it turned black. And so it is pitch black. I take an oath by that being [Allâh ﷻ] who sent

you with the truth that if a garment of the inmates of Hell were to appear before the inhabitants of this world, they would all die together. If a bucket of its drink were to be poured on all the waters of the world, whoever drinks it will be killed. If one arm's length of its chain which Allâh ﷻ mentioned in the Qur'ân "in a chain whose length is 70 arms length" [28] – the extent of one arm length is between east and west – were to be placed on the mountains of this world, they would all melt. If a person is put into the Hell-fire and is then removed, the people of this world will all die on account of the offensive odour that he will emit."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then asked Jibra'îl ﷺ: "Describe to me the gates of Hell. Are they like these gates of ours?" He replied: "No. Instead, they have levels some of which are lower than others. The distance between one gate and the next is a journey of 70 years. Each door is 70 times hotter than the one next to it." He also asked him about the inhabitants of these gates. He replied: "As for the lowest level, in it are the hypocrites. The name of this level is *al-hâwiyah*. Allâh ﷻ says: "The hypocrites are in the lowest level of the fire." [29] In the second level are the polytheists. The name of this level is *al-jahîm*. In the third level are the Sabeans. The name of this level is *saqar*. In the fourth level is Satan – curse be on him – and the Mageans who followed him. The name of this level is *lazâ*. In the fifth level are the Jews. The name of this level is *al-hutamah*. In the sixth level are the Christians. The name of this level is *as-sa'îr*." Jibra'îl ﷺ then remained silent. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: "You did not inform me about the inmates of the seventh level." Jibra'îl ﷺ replied: "O Muhammad! Do not ask me about them." He said: "You must certainly inform me." Jibra'îl ﷺ said: "In this [seventh] level are those from your *ummah* who committed major sins and passed away without having repented."

It is related that when this verse was revealed: "There isn't anyone among you who will not pass it", [30] the fear of the Prophet ﷺ over his *ummah* became intense and he cried profusely. So the person who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ, the severity of His power and might, fears Allâh ﷻ intensely and he cries over his soul and his excesses even before he can see these

difficulties, even before he can physically see that frightful abode [Hell], before the veils can be lifted when he is presented before the avenging and almighty [Allâh ﷻ], and before he is ordered to be flung into the Hell-fire. Many an old man in the Hell-fire will cry out: “O my old age and grey hair!” Many a youth in the Hell-fire will cry out: “O my youth!” Many a woman in the Hell-fire will cry out: “O my disgrace! O my degradation and disclosure!” Their faces and bodies will be blackened and the backs will be broken. Their elders will not be honoured, their young will not be shown mercy and their women will not be covered.

O Allâh! Save us from the Hell-fire, from the chastisement of the Hell-fire and from every deed that will take us closer to the Hell-fire. Admit us into Paradise with the righteous ones through Your mercy, O the mighty, the forgiving! O Allâh! Conceal our weaknesses, turn our fears into peace, lift us up from our shortfalls, and do not disgrace us before You, O the most Merciful of those who show mercy. And peace and salutations upon our leader Muhammad ﷺ, his family and his Companions.

ON REPENTANCE

Repentance is incumbent on every Muslim male and female. Allâh ﷻ says: “turn to Allâh in repentance, a sincere repentance.” [31] This verse issues an order which shows that it is incumbent. Allâh ﷻ says: “Do not be like those who forgot Allâh”, in other words, they made a covenant with Allâh ﷻ and then flung His Book behind their backs, “and so they forgot their own selves”. [32] In other words, their condition caused them to forget their selves to the extent that they did not prohibit their selves and did not do any good for their selves.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who loves to meet Allâh, Allâh loves to meet him. The person who dislikes to meet Allâh, Allâh dislikes to meet him.”

“It is they who are the deviated ones.” In other words, those who go against His obedience, who break their promises. In other words, they deviate from the path of guidance, mercy and forgiveness.

A *fâsiq* is of two types. One is an unbeliever. The other is an insolent and shameless deviated person. The *fâsiq* who is an unbeliever is the one who does not believe in Allâh, His Messenger, who leaves the path of guidance and treads the path of deviation. Allâh ﷻ says: “So he turned away from the command of his Sustainer.” In other words, he left the path of obedience when his Sustainer ordered him to believe. As for the insolent and shameless deviated person, he is the one who consumes intoxicants, who eats the prohibited, who commits adultery, who disobeys Allâh ﷻ, who leaves the path of worship and enters the path of sinning, but does not commit acts of polytheism.

The difference between the two is that the *fâsiq* who is an unbeliever cannot hope for his forgiveness unless he bears testimony [to the oneness of Allâh ﷻ and the prophet-hood of Muhammad ﷺ] before death comes to him.

As for the insolent and shameless deviated person, he can hope for his forgiveness through repentance and remorse before death.

It should be borne in mind that forgiveness can be hoped for every sin whose source is personal desire. And that forgiveness cannot be hoped for every sin whose source is pride. The source of Satan's disobedience was pride. It is therefore necessary that you repent from your sins before death, out of hope that Allâh ﷻ will accept you. Allâh ﷻ says: "It is He who accepts repentance of His servants, who pardons evils, and knows whatever you do." [33] In other words, He overlooks what they did by accepting repentance.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The person who repents from a sin is like a person who committed no sin."

It is related that there was a person who, whenever he committed a sin, would record it in a register. One day he committed a sin and opened his register in order to record it. But he found it blank except for the words of Allâh ﷻ: "for it is for such that Allâh shall transform their bad deeds into good deeds." [34] In other words, He changes polytheism into îmân, adultery into forgiveness, disobedience into protection and obedience.

It is related that on one occasion 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ was walking in the alleys of Madinah when a youth was walking towards him, carrying a bottle under his clothes. 'Umar ؓ said to him: "O youth! What are you carrying under your clothes?" There was alcohol in that bottle, so the youth felt ashamed to say that he was carrying alcohol. He therefore said silently: "O my Allâh! Do not disgrace and humiliate me before 'Umar. Conceal my sin before him and I will never consume alcohol again." He then said to 'Umar: "O Leader of the Believers! I am carrying vinegar." He said to the youth: "Show me so that I could have a look at it." The youth opened the bottle before him and when 'Umar saw it, it had become vinegar. Look at a creation who repented out of fear of another creation, and so Allâh changed his alcohol into vinegar because of his sincere repentance. If a sinful person who is completely bankrupt of good deeds makes a sincere repentance and

is remorseful of his sins, Allâh ﷻ will change the alcohol of his sins into vinegar of obedience.

Abû Hurayrah رضى الله عنه reports: “After offering the *ishâ salâh* with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ one night, I went out. On the way I saw a woman who said to me: ‘O Abû Hurayrah! I have committed a sin. Is there any way of repentance for me?’ I said: ‘What sin have you committed?’ She replied: ‘I committed adultery and then killed my child which was born from this adultery.’ I said to her: ‘You are destroyed and you have also destroyed [the child]. I take an oath by Allâh that there is no way of repentance for you.’ She continued on her way in a swoon. I then thought to my self: ‘How can I issue a verdict when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is in our midst? So I returned to him and informed him of what transpired. You are destroyed and you have destroyed [this woman]. Don’t you know this verse: “Who invoke no other sovereign with Allâh and do not kill the soul which Allâh has forbidden except for a just cause. And they do not commit adultery. Whoever does that has fallen into sin. The punishment will be doubled for him on the day of resurrection and he shall remain therein disgraced. Except he who repented and believed and did some good deeds – for it is for such that Allâh shall transform their bad deeds into good deeds. And Allâh is forgiving, merciful.” [35] I then went out asking: Who will direct me to the woman who asked me a question? [I went about searching for her in search earnest that] even the children began saying that Abû Hurayrah is gone mad. I eventually found her and informed her of what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said. She groaned out of delight and said: ‘I have an orchard which I am giving as charity for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.’”

It is related with regard to ‘Utbah al-Ghulâm *rahimahullâh* that he was a shameless sinner, well known for causing corruption and drinking alcohol. One day he went to the assembly of Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* when the latter was explaining the verse: “Has not the time come for the believers that their hearts submit for the remembrance of Allâh?” [36] In other words, has not the time come for their hearts to fear? In explaining this verse, Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* delivered a very eloquent speech to the extent that he caused the people to cry. A youth from among them stood up and

said: “O pious person from among the believers! Will Allâh ﷻ accept a shameless sinner like me if I repent?” He replied: “Yes. Allâh ﷻ will accept the repentance of your shameless sinning.” When Utbah al-Ghulâm heard this, his face turned yellow, he began trembling fiercely, he screamed out and fell unconscious. When he regained consciousness, Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* went to him and said these couplets:

أيا شابا لرب العرش عاصي – أتدري يوم يؤخذ ذوي المعاصي
سعير للعصاة لها زفير – وغيط يوم يؤخذ بالنواصي
فإن تصبر على النيران فاعصه – وإلا كن عن العصيان قاصي
وفيما قد كسبت من الخطايا – رهنت النفس فاجهد في الخلاص

“O youth who is disobedient to the Lord of the throne. Do you know what the punishment is for those who are sinners? It is the blazing fire for the disobedient ones. This fire has a moaning sound and fury on the day when the sinners will be dragged by their forelocks. If you think you can patiently bear the fires, then disobey Him. If not, then distance yourself from disobedience. Why have you mortgaged your soul by earning these sins? Now make an all out effort to rescue yourself.”

On hearing this, ‘Utbah gave out a loud scream and fell unconscious. When he regained consciousness, he said: “O Shaykh! Will the merciful Allâh accept the repentance of an evil and wicked person like me?” The Shaykh replied: “Who but the forgiving Allâh can accept the repentance of an uncouth servant?” He then raised his head and made three supplications: (1) “O Allâh! If You accept my repentance and forgive me my sins, then honour me with understanding and memory so that I could memorize all that I hear of knowledge and the Qur’ân. (2) O Allâh! Honour me with a beautiful voice so that every person who hears my recitation will increase the softness of his heart even if he is a hard hearted person. (3) O Allâh! Honour me with lawful sustenance and provide me with sustenance from avenues I did not even imagine.” Allâh ﷻ accepted all his supplications to the extent that his understanding and memory increased, when he used to recite the Qur’ân, everyone who heard his recitation would repent, and

daily a bowl of curry and two round-flat breads would be placed by his house without anyone knowing who placed it there. He remained in this condition till he left this world. This is the condition of the person who turns to Allâh ﷻ in repentance. Allâh ﷻ does not waste the reward of he who does good.

An *âlim* was asked whether a servant can know whether his repentance has been accepted or rejected. He replied: “We cannot say for certainty. But there are signs and indications for this: he must see himself protected from sinning, he must see joy having disappeared from his heart, that Allâh is watching him, he must be keeping close company with the pious while distancing himself from sinners, he must consider the little of this world to be a lot while he must consider a lot of deeds of the hereafter to be little, he must see his heart engrossed in what Allâh ﷻ made incumbent on him, he must be safeguarding his tongue, he must be in constant reflection, always sorrowful and regretful over his past sins.

ON LOVE

It is mentioned that a person saw an ugly picture in the desert so he asked: “Who are you?” It replied: “I am your evil deeds.” He asked: “How can I save myself from you?” It replied: “Sending salutations on the Prophet ﷺ.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Sending salutation on me will be light on the *sirât*. Whoever sends 80 salutations on me on Friday, Allâh ﷻ will forgive him the sins of 80 years.”

It is related that a person was neglectful of sending salutations on our leader Muhammad ﷺ. One night he saw the Prophet ﷺ in a dream in such a state that the Prophet ﷺ paid no attention to him. So he said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Are you angry with me?” He replied: “No.” The man said: “Then why are you not looking at me?” He said: “Because I do not recognize you.” The man said: “How can you not recognize me when I am a person from your *ummah*? And the *ulamâ* have narrated that you recognize your *ummah* better than how a mother recognizes her child?” He said: “The *ulamâ* are correct. But you do not remember me with salutations. And my recognition of members of my *ummah* is according to how much salutations they send to me.” The man then got up from his sleep and made it incumbent upon himself to send 100 salutations to the Prophet ﷺ daily. And so he did that. He then saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ after that in a dream and he said to him: “Now I recognize you. And I will intercede on your behalf.” This is because he now became a beloved of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

Allâh ﷻ says: “If you have love for Allâh...” The circumstances behind the revelation of this verse is that when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ invited Ka‘b ibn al-Ashraf and his friends to Islam, they replied: “We are like the children of Allâh and we love Allâh far more intensely.” So Allâh ﷻ said to His Prophet ﷺ: “If you have love for Allâh then follow my way.” On my religion for I am the Messenger of Allâh, I am conveying His message

to you and I am His proof against you. “so that Allâh may love you and forgive you your sins. And Allâh is forgiving, merciful.” [37] The believers’ love for Allâh ﷻ entails obeying His commands, giving preference to obedience to Him, and seeking His pleasure. Allâh’s love for the believers entails His praising them, rewarding them, pardoning them, showering them with His mercy, protecting them and inspiring them to do good.

The Imâm [Ghazzâlî] says in his *Ihyâ*: Whoever claims four things without doing four things is a liar. Whoever claims to love Paradise without doing acts of obedience is a liar. Whoever claims love of the Prophet ﷺ without loving the ‘ulamâ’ and the poor is a liar. Whoever claims fear of the Hell-fire without abstaining from sins is a liar. Whoever claims love of Allâh ﷻ but complains when any calamity afflicts him is a liar. Râbi‘ah said:

تعصي الإله وأنت تظهر حبه — هذا لعمرى في القياس بديع

لو كان حبك صادقاً لأطعته — إن المحب لمن يحب مطيع

“You disobey Allâh and yet you claim love for Him. I take an oath that this is a very strange way of thinking. Had your love been true, you would have obeyed Him. Surely the lover obeys the one whom he loves.”

The indication and sign of love is agreement with the beloved and abstaining from contradicting him.

It is related that a group of people went to ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* so he asked them: “Who are you?” They replied: “We are the ones who love you.” He turned around and then pelted them with stones and so they fled from him. He said to them: “Why are you fleeing from me? If you really loved me, you would not flee from my affliction.” Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* then said: “The people of love drank the cup of love and so the earth and lands became constricted upon them. They recognized Allâh ﷻ as He ought to be recognized. They wandered in His grandeur and were at a loss in His might. They drank the cup of His love and they drowned in the ocean of His intimacy and they took delight in speaking to Him in privacy.” He then said the following couplets:

ذکر المحبة یا مولای أسکرنی - وهل رأیت محبا غیر سکران

“O my Master! The remembrance of love has made me intoxicated. Have you ever seen a lover not intoxicated [in his love]?”

It is said that when a camel becomes intoxicated [with love], it does not eat fodder for 40 days. And if several times the normal load that it carries were to be loaded on it, it will carry it. This is because when the thought of its beloved stirs in its heart, it does not like to eat fodder and does not even bother about the heavy weight that is loaded onto it. All this is because it is longing for its beloved. If a camel can abandon its desire [for food] and carry a heavy weight because of its beloved, have you left the desire to commit an unlawful act for the sake of Allâh ﷻ? Have you abstained from food and drink for the sake of Allâh ﷻ? Have you borne heavy weights [responsibilities] on your selves for the sake of Allâh ﷻ? If you have not done any of these good acts which I have mentioned, then your claim has no meaning whatsoever. It is of no use in this world, in the hereafter, with the creation, nor with the Creator.

‘Alî ؑ said: “The person who yearns for Paradise hastens towards good deeds. The person who fears the Hell-fire prohibits his self from desires. The person who is convinced of death, considers all pleasures to be insignificant.”

Ibrâhîm al-Khawwâs was asked about love so he said: “Love entails wiping out all your intentions, burning all attributes and needs, and drowning oneself in the ocean of mere indications.”

ON INTENSE LOVE

Love refers to the inclination of one's nature towards something from which you take joy. If that inclination is emphasised and very strong, it is known as *'ishq*. It goes beyond the limits to the extent that the lover becomes a slave of his beloved and he spends whatever he owns for the sake of the beloved. Have you not seen how Zulaykhâ loved Yûsuf عليه السلام to such an extent that all her wealth and beauty was finished [because of this love]. She had precious stones and necklaces equivalent to the load of 70 camels. She spent all this wealth for the love of Yûsuf عليه السلام. Whoever said to her: "I have seen Yûsuf", she would give that person a necklace that would make him rich. She continued doing this until nothing was left. She used to name everything with the name "Yûsuf". She thus forgot everything but him because of her intense love for him. When she used to raise her head towards the sky, she would see his name written on the stars.

It is narrated that when she embraced Islam and married him, she secluded herself from him and remained in solitude for the worship of Allâh ﷻ. Yûsuf عليه السلام would invite her to his bed during the day and she would refuse him till the night. When he would invite her at night, she would delay for the next day. She said to him: "O Yûsuf! I used to love you before I truly recognized Allâh ﷻ. Now that I have truly recognized Him, my intense love for Him has left no room for me to love anyone else. And I do not want anyone in exchange for Him." Yûsuf عليه السلام eventually said to her: "It is Allâh ﷻ who has ordered me. He has informed me that He is going to enable you to give birth to two sons whom He is going to make Prophets." She replied: "If Allâh has commanded you this and has made me a means for this, then I obey the command of Allâh ﷻ." It was only then that she went to him.

It is related that Majnûn [who used to love Laylâ profusely] was asked: "What is your name?" He replied: "Laylâ." One day he was asked: "Has Laylâ passed away?" He replied: "Laylâ is in my heart. She did not die. I

am Laylâ.” One day he passed by the house of Laylâ and began looking at the sky. Someone said to him: “O Majnûn! Do not look at the sky, rather look at the wall of Laylâ’s house, perhaps you will see her.” He replied: “To look at the star whose shadow is falling on the house of Laylâ is sufficient for me.”

It is related that Mansûr al-Hallâj *rahimahullâh* was imprisoned for 18 days. Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* went to visit him and said: “O Mansûr! What is the meaning of love?” He replied: “Do not ask me today, ask me tomorrow.” The following day they took him out of prison and placed the leather mat for his execution. Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* passed by him so he called out: “O Shiblî! The beginning of love is a burning desire and the end of it results in death.”

This is a reference to what happened to al-Hallâj *rahimahullâh* who felt that everything apart from Allâh ﷻ was false and untrue. And he knew for certainty that Allâh ﷻ alone was the truth. When the certainty of Allâh’s name *al-Haqq* – the True One – was realized by him, he even forgot his own name. So when he was asked: “Who are you?” He replied: “I am *al-Haqq*.”

It is reported that the authenticity of love can be gauged through three qualities: (1) The lover must give preference to the speech of his beloved over the speech of others. (2) He must give preference to being in the company of his beloved over the company of others. (3) He must give preference to the pleasure of his beloved over the pleasure of others...as stated in the book, *al-Muntahâ*. It is stated that love entails the removal of all veils and the exposition of all secrets. And that the ecstasy of love entails the inability of the soul to bear the overpowering of yearning when a person experiences the sweetness of remembrance [of Allâh ﷻ] to such an extent that if one of his limbs are cut off he neither feels it nor perceives it.

It is related that a person was having a bath in the Euphrates river when he heard a person reciting this verse: “You stand aside today, O sinners!” [38] On hearing this verse, he began trembling to such an extent that he drowned and died. Muhammad ibn Abdillâh al-Baghdâdî says: “In Basra I saw a youth standing on a high roof, looking down at the people and saying:

‘Whoever dies as a lover should die like this. There is no good in love without death.’ He then threw himself and died.”

Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: “Tasawwuf entails giving up testing.”

It is related that Dhû an-Nûn al-Misrî *rahimahullâh* entered the Sacred Musjid [of Makkah] and saw a youth naked, lying down and sick under a pillar. He was moaning from a heart that was sorrowful. He says: “I approached him and greeted him. I said to him: ‘Who are you, O boy!’ He replied: ‘I am a stranger, a lover.’ I understood what he was saying so I said to him: ‘I am also like you.’ He began crying and I also began crying on seeing him crying. He said: ‘Are you also crying?’ I replied: ‘I am just like you.’ He then cried even louder and gave out a screeching scream and passed away there and then. I placed my garment over him and went out in order to purchase a shroud for him. I purchased it and returned to him and saw that he was not there. So I said to myself: ‘Glory to Allâh.’ I then heard someone calling out: ‘O Dhû an-Nûn! Satan looked for this stranger in this world but did not find him. Mâlik [the keeper of Hell] looked for him but did not find him. Ridwân, [the keeper of Paradise] looked for him in Paradise but did not find him.’ I asked: ‘So where is he?’ I then heard someone calling out: ‘Sitting in a seat of truth, in the presence of a sovereign who has control over all.’ [39] This was because of his intense love [for Allâh], his abundant obedience to Him and his swift repentance to Him. As related in the book, *Zahr ar-Riyâd*.

A shaykh was asked about a true lover. He replied: “He mixes very little with people, he remains a lot in solitude, he is always in thought, he is outwardly silent, he does not really see when he looks, he does not hear when he is called, he does not understand when he is spoken to, he does not grieve when afflicted by a calamity, when afflicted by hunger he does not even realize it, when he has no clothes he does not perceive this, when someone is abusive towards him he does not fear, he looks at Allâh ﷻ in his hours of solitude and likes to be in company with Him, he speaks to Him in privacy, and he does not dispute with the people of this world in their worldly matters.”

Abû Tawwâb an-Nakhshabî wrote the following lines on the signs of love:

لا تخدعن فللحبیب دلائل - ولديه من تحف الحبیب وسائل
 منها تمنعه بمر بلائه - وسروره فی کل ما هو فاعل
 فالمنع منه عطية مقبولة - والفقر إكرام وبر عاجل
 ومن الدلائل أن ترى من عزمه - طوع الحبیب وإن ألح العاذل
 ومن الدلائل أن يرى مبتسما - والقلب فيه من الحبیب بلايل
 ومن الدلائل أن يرى متفهما - لكلام من يحظى لديه السائل
 ومن الدلائل أن يرى متقشفا - متحفظا من كل ما هو قائل

“Do not be deluded for there are signs of a true lover. He has the means of gaining gifts from the beloved. Among them are his enjoyment when He afflicts him with calamities. His happiness at everything that he does. When He holds back from giving him, he considers this to be an accepted gift. He considers poverty to be an honour and a quick way of acquiring piety. Among the signs is that you see him bent on obeying his beloved [Allâh] even if some one persists in censuring him. Among the signs is that he is seen to be smiling while his heart is anxious about his beloved [Allâh]. Among the signs is that he is seen to be trying to comprehend the speech of the one who tries to ask him a question. Among the signs is that he is seen to pay no attention to his appearance, fully thinking [and guarding] everything that he is to say.”

Îsâ ﷺ happened to pass by a youth who was watering an orchard. So this youth said to Îsâ ﷺ: “Ask your Sustainer to provide me with an atom’s weight of His love.” Îsâ ﷺ said to him: “You will not be able to bear an atom’s weight.” So he said: “Okay, half an atom’s weight.” Îsâ ﷺ said: “O my Sustainer! Provide him with half an atom’s weight of Your love.” Îsâ ﷺ then continued on his way. After a very long time, he happened to pass by that place where he had met that youth. So he inquired about him. Some people said to him: “He became insane and went away to the mountains.” Îsâ ﷺ asked Allâh ﷻ to show this youth to him. He directed him to a spot among the mountains. He saw the youth standing on a rock staring at the skies. Îsâ ﷺ greeted him but he did not reply. So he said: “I am Îsâ.” Allâh ﷻ inspired to Îsâ ﷺ saying: “How can that person who has half an

atom's weight of My love ever hear the speech of humans? I take an oath by My honour and My grandeur, if I were to cut him with a saw he will not even know that."

The person who makes three claims without purifying himself from three things is in deception. (1) The person who claims to experience the sweetness of the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ while he loves this world. (2) The person who claims to love sincerity and devotion in his deeds while he loves people to honour him. (3) The person who claims to love his Creator without suppressing his soul.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "There will come a time when my followers will love five things and forget five things: (1) They will love this world and forget the hereafter. (2) They will love wealth and forget the reckoning. (3) They will love the creation and forget the Creator. (4) They will love sins and forget about repentance. (5) They will love mansions and they will forget the graveyard."

While admonishing a youth, Mansûr ibn 'Ammâr said to him: "O youth! Do not let your youth deceive you. For many a youth delayed repentance, had long hopes but did not think about his death." The youth said: "I will repent tomorrow or the day after tomorrow." The angel of death came to him when he was neglectful of repentance. He thus entered the pit of the grave – where neither wealth, slaves, children, father nor mother could be of any avail to him. Allâh ﷻ says: "The day when neither wealth nor offspring will be of any avail. Except he who comes before Allâh with a sound heart." [\[40\]](#)

O Allâh! Enable us to repent before death, remind us when we become neglectful, and benefit us with the intercession of our Prophet, the best of the Messengers ﷺ.



The true quality of a believer is that he repents on that very day at that very time, that he is remorseful over his sins, that he is pleased with the basic food of the world, that he does not become engrossed in this world, that he



rather becomes engrossed in doing deeds for the hereafter, and that he worships Allâh ﷻ with sincerity.

There was a stingy hypocrite who took an oath to divorce his wife if she were to give anything in charity. A beggar came to his door and said: “O people of this house! I ask with the right of Allâh that you should give me something.” So the woman gave him three flat round loaves of bread. The hypocrite met him on the way and asked him: “Who gave you this bread?” He replied: “A woman from such and such house gave it to me.” He was referring to the hypocrite’s house. The hypocrite went to his house and asked his wife: “Did I not take an oath to you that you should not give anything to anyone?” She replied: “I gave it for the pleasure of Allâh.” The hypocrite went and kindled the oven until it became extremely hot. He then said to his wife: “Get up and throw yourself into this oven for the pleasure of Allâh.” The woman got up and took her jewellery. The hypocrite said: “Leave the jewellery one side.” She replied: “The lover beautifies himself for his beloved. And I am going to visit my beloved.” She then flung herself into the oven. The hypocrite shut the door of the oven onto her and went away. After three days the hypocrite came and opened the door of the oven only to find the woman safe and sound by the power of Allâh ﷻ. The man became extremely surprised at this. Someone called out to him saying: “Don’t you know that the fire does not burn Our beloved ones?”

It is related the Âsiyah, the wife of Pharaoh, had been concealing her îman from Pharaoh. When he came to know of this, he ordered that she should be tortured. And so, they tortured her with various types of punishments. He ordered her to renounce her faith but she refused. He then ordered that stakes be brought and they struck her with them on her sides. He again ordered her to renounce her faith. She replied: “You know that my soul and heart are under the protection of my Sustainer. If you cut me piece by piece it will only increase my love [for Allâh ﷻ].” Mûsâ ﷺ passed by her so she called out: “O Mûsâ! Tell me, is my Sustainer pleased with me or angry with me?” Mûsâ ﷺ replied: “O Âsiyah! The angels of the heavens are anxiously waiting for you. And Allâh ﷻ is mentioning you with pride. So ask whatever you want and it will be fulfilled.” She said: “O my Sustainer!

Build for me a house with You in Paradise and rescue me from Pharaoh and his deeds, and rescue me from the people who are wrongdoers.” [\[41\]](#)

Salmân  says that Pharaoh’s wife used to be tortured in the sun. But when they [her torturers] used to turn away from her, the angels would shade her with their wings. And she used to see her dwelling in Paradise. Abû Hurayrah  reports that Pharaoh pegged four stakes for his wife and forced her to lie down and made her chest to go round like a millstone. And he made her face the intense heat of the sun. She raised her head towards the sky and said: “O my Sustainer! Build for me a house with You in Paradise and rescue me from Pharaoh and his deeds, and rescue me from the people who are wrongdoers.”

Al-Hasan says: “Allâh  saved her in a most honourable manner and raised her to heaven where she is eating and drinking. In this is proof that seeking refuge in Allâh , begging to Him, and asking Him to rescue one from trials and tribulations are all acts that have been the way of the righteous and the practice of the believers.

ON OBEDIENCE TO ALLÂH, LOVE FOR HIM AND LOVE FOR HIS MESSENGER R

Allâh ﷻ says: “If you have love for Allâh then follow my way so that Allâh may love you.” [42] You should know that a servant’s love for Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ entails obedience to them and following their orders. And that Allâh’s love for His servants entails His blessing them with forgiveness. It is said that when a person realizes that real perfection belongs to none but Allâh ﷻ and that all the perfection that he sees in himself or in others is from Allâh ﷻ and through Him, then his love will only be for Allâh ﷻ and solely for His pleasure. This demands the will to obey Him and the desire to do all that He consents to. It is for this reason that love is explained as the will to obey and it has been made a requirement for following the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in worshipping Him and urging one to obey Him.

Al-Hasan reports: “Some people in the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘O Muhammad! We certainly love our Sustainer.’ So Allâh ﷻ revealed the above verse.” Bishr al-Hâfi *rahimahullâh* says: “I saw the Prophet ﷺ in a dream so he asked me: ‘O Bishr! Do you know why Allâh ﷻ raised you above your contemporaries?’ I replied: ‘No. O Messenger of Allâh.’ He said: ‘On account of the services you rendered to the righteous, the advice you gave to your fellow brothers, your love for your companions and those who follow my Sunnah, and your following of my Sunnah.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever revives my Sunnah has in fact loved me. And he who loves me shall be with me in Paradise on the day of resurrection.”

It is stated in famous Traditions that the person who holds on to the Sunnah of the leader of the creation and the leader of the Messengers at a time when

the creation has become corrupt and people are following divergent ways, he will receive the reward of 100 martyrs.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Everyone of my *ummah* shall enter Paradise except he who refuses.” He was asked: “Who is the one who refuses?” He said: “He who obeys me shall enter Paradise. He who disobeys me has in fact refused. Every act that is not in accordance with my Sunnah is an act of disobedience.”

A person said: “If you see a shaykh flying in the air, walking on water, eating fire, or any other similar act, while he leaves out one of the incumbent duties of Allâh ﷻ or intentionally leaves out one of the Sunnahs, you should know that he is a liar in his claims, and that these acts of his are not miracles. They are merely lures towards destruction. We seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from such a person.”

Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: “No one reached Allâh except through Allâh. And the manner of reaching Allâh ﷻ is obedience to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.”

Ahmad al-Hawâî *rahimahullâh* said: “Every act that is not in accordance with the Sunnah is baseless. As the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘Whoever destroys my Sunnah, my intercession becomes prohibited on him.’” As related in *Shir‘ah al-Islâm*.

It is related that a man saw some mad people doing things which he did not know about. So he went and informed Ma‘rûf al-Karkhî *rahimahullâh* about this. The latter smiled and said: “O my brother! Allâh has lovers who are small and big, intelligent and mad-men. What you have seen is from mad-men.”

It is stated that al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: “Our teacher as-Surî *rahimahullâh* became ill and we did not know what medication to give for his illness nor did we know the reason behind his illness. Someone recommended an expert physician so we took a bottle of his urine. The physician looked at the bottle and began staring at it for quite some time.

He then said: ‘This is the urine of a person who truly loves Allâh.’ Al-Junayd says: ‘I was stunned [at hearing this] and fell unconscious. The bottle also fell from my hand. I then returned to as-Surîy *rahimahullâh* and informed him of what transpired. On hearing this he smiled and said: ‘The physician has a very good sight.’ I said: ‘O teacher! Love becomes apparent in one’s urine as well?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’”

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “If someone asks you if you love Allâh ﷻ, then remain silent. Because if you reply in the negative, you will be making a statement of unbelief. If you reply in the affirmative your description of yourself will not be that of those who truly love Allâh. You should then beware of hatred.”

Sufyân *rahimahullâh* said: “The person who loves he who loves Allâh ﷻ has in fact loved Allâh ﷻ. The person who honours he who honours Allâh ﷻ has in fact honoured Allâh ﷻ.”

Sahl *rahimahullâh* said: “The sign of love for Allâh ﷻ is love for the Qur’ân. The sign of love for Allâh ﷻ and love for the Qur’ân is love for the Prophet ﷺ. The sign of love for the Prophet ﷺ is love for his Sunnah. The sign of love for his Sunnah is love for the hereafter. The sign of love for the hereafter is hatred for this world. The sign of hatred for this world is that it is only considered to be a means and a conveyance to the hereafter.”

Abû al-Hasan az-Zunjânî *rahimahullâh* said: “The foundation of worship is on three pillars: the eye, the heart and the tongue. The eye for admonition, the heart for contemplation, and the tongue for honesty, glorifying and remembering Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

“O believers! Remember Allâh with unceasing remembrance, and continue glorifying Him at morning and evening.” (Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 41-42)

It is related that Abdullâh and Ahmad ibn Harb stopped at a place. Ahmad ibn Harb cut a blade of grass from the ground. So Abdullâh said to him: "By doing this, five points are written against you: (1) You have occupied your heart with something thereby preventing you from glorifying your Master. (2) You have habituated your soul to occupy itself in something that does not entail remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. (3) You have made this to become a way which others will follow you in. (4) In so doing, you would be preventing others from glorifying Allâh ﷻ. (5) You have subjugated your self to the proof of Allâh ﷻ against you on the day of resurrection." As related in *Raunaq al-Majâlis*.

As-Surîy *rahimahullâh* said: "I saw that al-Jurjânî *rahimahullâh* had some *sawîq* (a kind of mush made of wheat or barley, with sugar and dates) from which he would constantly eat. I said to him: 'Why do you not eat some other food as well?' He replied: 'I calculated that the difference in time between chewing food and swallowing this *sawîq*, was 90 *tasbîhs* (saying glory to Allâh). I therefore never chewed any bread for the last 40 years.'"

It was the habit of Sahl ibn Abdillâh to eat every 15 days. When the month of Ramadân would come, he would have just one meal [for the entire month]. At times he would do without food for 70 days. [He had habituated himself to this to such an extent] that if he ate, he would become weak. And if he remained hungry, he would become strong. Abû Hammâd al-Aswad remained in al-Musjid al-Harâm for 30 years. He was never seen to eat or drink. And not a single moment of his was devoid of the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.

It is related that 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd would only leave his house for three reasons: (1) To offer the salâh in congregation. (2) To visit the sick. (3) To attend a funeral. He used to say: "I see that people are thieves and highway robbers. Life is a valuable jewel. No price can be attached to it. It is therefore appropriate to fill thereof a treasure that will remain in the hereafter. You should know that the one who desires the hereafter has to abstain from this worldly life so that his main concern remains one. And that his internal self should not differ from his outward. One cannot safeguard his condition without controlling his inner and outward selves."

Ibrâhîm ibn al-Hâkim said: “When sleep would overtake my father, he would go to the sea and swim therein. The fish of the sea would gather around him and swim with him.”

It is related that Wahb ibn Munabbih asked Allâh ﷻ to take away his sleep at night. He thus did not sleep at night for 40 years. Hasan al-Hallâj tied himself from his ankle to his knee with 13 chains. With those chains he used to offer 1000 rak‘ats of salâh every night. In the beginning stages, al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* would go to the market, open his shop, go inside, close the curtain [to the shop], offer 400 rak‘ats of salâh and then return to his house. Habshî ibn Dâ’ûd *rahimahullâh* offered the *fajr salâh* with the ablution of the ‘*ishâ salâh*’ for a period of 40 years. It is the duty of a believer to always be in a state of purity. Every time his *wudû* (ablution) breaks, he should perform a fresh ablution and offer two rak‘ats of salâh. He should always try to face the qiblah whenever he is sitting, and imagine himself to be sitting in front of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. That he is before the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and that he is watching him. A person should do this so that he develops Allâh-inspired peace of mind and dignity in all his actions. He should bear difficulties, do not confront the one who does harm to him, and forgive everyone who harms him. He should not become self-conceited nor proud of his knowledge. This is because conceit is one of the attributes of Satan. He should look at himself as being totally insignificant while he should look at the pious servants with respect and honour. The person who does not recognize the sanctity of the pious ones, Allâh ﷻ will deprive him of their company. The person who does not recognize the sanctity of obedience will have the sweetness of obedience removed from his heart.

A person asked Fudayl ibn ‘Iyâd *rahimahullâh*: “O Abû ‘Alî! When does a person become a righteous person?” He replied: “If advice is in his intention, fear in his heart, honesty on his tongue, and good deeds in his limbs.” When the Prophet ﷺ went on *mi‘râj*, Allâh ﷻ said to him: “O Ahmad! If you want to become the most pious person, detach yourself from the world and yearn for the hereafter.” He said: “O my Allâh! How should I detach myself from the world?” Allâh ﷻ said: “Only take from the world that which would suffice you your food, drink and clothing. Do not store for

tomorrow, and be constant in My remembrance.” He asked: “O my Allâh! How can I be constant in Your remembrance?” He replied: “By secluding yourself from people. Make salâh your sleep and hunger your food.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Detachment from this world provides comfort to the heart and body. Hankering after this world causes abundant worry and grief. Love for this world is the cause of every sin while detachment from this world is the source of every good and obedience.”

It is related that a pious servant of Allâh ﷺ happened to pass by a group in which there was a physician who was describing an illness and the medication for it. So he said to the physician: “O you who treats bodies, do you treat hearts as well?” He replied: “Yes. Tell me what is its ailment?” He replied: “Sins have caused it to become dark. It has therefore become hard and course. Is there any treatment for it?” The physician replied: “The treatment for it is submission [before Allâh ﷻ], beseeching [Him], seeking forgiveness night and day, hastening towards the obedience of the Mighty and Forgiving [Allâh], and asking pardon from the Almighty, all-Powerful [Allâh]. This is the treatment for the hearts and the cure will come from the unseen.” On hearing this, the pious man screamed out, continued on his way, crying, and said: “What a good physician you are. You have correctly diagnosed the treatment for my heart.” The physician replied: “This is the treatment for the heart of the one who repented and returned with his heart to *al-Barr* – the Good, the One who accepts repentance.”

It is related that a person purchased a slave. The slave said: “O my master! I am making three conditions with you. (1) You must not stop me from offering the compulsory salâh when its time comes. (2) You can order me to do whatever you want during the day, but do not ask me to do anything at night. (3) You must provide separate quarters in your house for me. These quarters must be such that no one but myself can go to it.” The person replied: “I accept all these conditions.” He then said to the slave: “Go and check out the living quarters and choose one for yourself. He found one that was ruined. So he said: “I take this one.” The master said: “O slave! You have chosen one that is ruined.” He replied: “O master! Don’t you know that a ruined place in the sight of Allâh is a garden.” So this slave used to serve his master during the day and set aside the night for the worship of his

Sustainer. One night the master began walking around and came to the room of the slave. He found that the room was illuminated. The slave was in prostration. There was a candle of light on his head which was suspended between the heavens and earth. The slave was talking to Allâh ﷻ and beseeching Him and saying: “O my Allâh! You have made incumbent upon me to fulfil the rights of my master and to serve him by day. Were it not for that, I would have spent all my day and night in Your service. So forgive me, O my Sustainer!” The master continued watching his slave right till dawn. The candle of light returned and the roof of the house closed. The master returned and informed his wife of what he saw. The following night he took his wife by the hand and led her to the slave’s room door. They both saw the slave in prostration with the candle of light on his head. They stood by the door, watching him and crying right till the morning. He then called his slave and said to him: “You are free for the sake of Allâh ﷻ so that you can be free for the worship of that being to whom you were asking forgiveness. The slave raised his hands towards the sky and said:

يا صاحب السر إن السر قد ظهرا — ولا أريد حياتي بعدما اشتهرا

“O the one who knew my secret! The secret has now been exposed. Now I do not want to live after it has been exposed.”

He then said: “O my Allâh! I ask you for death.” The slave then fell down dead. This is the condition of the righteous, those who love Allâh ﷻ and those who seek Him alone.

It is stated in *Zahr ar-Riyâd* that Mûsâ عليه السلام had a friend whose company he used to like. One day he said: “O Mûsâ! Supplicate to Allâh ﷻ that I be able to recognize Him as He ought to be recognized.” Mûsâ عليه السلام supplicated in his favour and the supplication was accepted. So this friend went away into the mountains, living with wild animals. Mûsâ عليه السلام could not find him, so he said: “O my Sustainer! My brother and my friend. I am missing him.” An answer was given: “O Mûsâ! The person who truly recognizes me will never remain in the company of the creation.”

It is related that Yahyâ عليه السلام and Îsâ عليه السلام were walking in the market when a woman knocked into them. Yahyâ عليه السلام said: “By Allâh! I did not even perceive her.” So Îsâ عليه السلام said: “Glory to Allâh! Your body is with me, but where is your heart?” He said: “O my cousin! If my heart were to find tranquillity with someone other than my Sustainer for even the blink of an eye, I would imagine that I did not truly recognize Allâh ﷻ.”

It is said that true recognition entails divorcing this world and the hereafter, and devoting oneself solely to Allâh ﷻ. And that the person be intoxicated with the drink of love [of Allâh ﷻ] and that he only becomes sober when he sees Allâh ﷻ. It is then that he will enjoy a special illumination from his Sustainer.

ON SATAN AND HIS PUNISHMENT

Allâh ﷻ says: “If you turn away”, in other words, if you turn away from the obedience of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, “then surely Allâh does not like the unbelievers.” In other words, He does not forgive them and does not accept their repentance as He did not accept the repentance of Satan because of his unbelief and his haughtiness. But He turned in repentance to Âdam ﷺ and accepted his repentance because he confessed to committing the sin, expressed remorse over its commitment, and reproached himself. All this despite the fact that what he did was not really a sin because the Prophets ﷺ are protected from sin, according to the correct opinion, they do not commit acts of disobedience ever – not before prophet-hood nor after it. Rather it looks and appears like a sin. It is for this reason that he and his wife, Hawwâ ﷺ, said: “O our Sustainer! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be among the losers.”[43] He thus expressed remorse, hastened towards repentance and was not despondent of the mercy of Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ says: “Do not despair of the mercy of Allâh.” [44]

As for Satan, he did not confess to his sins, he did not express any remorse over them, he did not reproach himself and he did not hasten towards repentance. Instead, he felt satisfied with the mercy of Allâh ﷻ and was haughty. So the person who is like Satan will not have his repentance accepted. As for he who is like Âdam ﷺ, Allâh ﷻ will accept his repentance. This is because when the origin of disobedience is desire, its forgiveness can be hoped for. But when the origin of disobedience is haughtiness, its forgiveness cannot be hoped for. The origin of Âdam’s ﷺ disobedience was desire while that of Satan was haughtiness.

It is related that Satan came to Mûsâ ﷺ and said to him: “You are the one whom Allâh chose for His message and spoke to you?” Mûsâ ﷺ replied: “Yes. So what do you want and who are you?” Satan replied: “O Mûsâ! Say

to your Sustainer that one of His creation has asked Him for repentance.” So Allâh ﷻ inspired to Mûsâ ﷺ saying to him: “Say to him that I have accepted what he has asked. But order him, O Mûsâ, to prostrate to the grave of Âdam. If he prostrates to his grave, I will accept his repentance and forgive him his sins.” Mûsâ ﷺ informed Satan thereof but he became angry, displayed his haughtiness and said: “O Mûsâ! I did not prostrate before him in Paradise, how can I prostrate before him when he is dead?”

It is related that the punishment will be made very severe on Satan when he is in the Hell-fire. He will be asked: “How did you find the punishment of Allâh?” He will reply: “The severest that it can ever be.” It will be said to him: “Âdam is in the gardens of Paradise. Prostrate before him and seek forgiveness so that you may be forgiven.” But he will refuse to do so. The punishment will be increased upon him 70 000 times more than what all the other inmates of the Hell-fire are experiencing. It is stated in a Tradition that Allâh ﷻ will remove Satan from the Hell-fire every 100 000 years. He will bring Âdam ﷺ before him and order Satan to prostrate before him. He will refuse and will be returned to the Hell-fire.

My beloved brothers, if you want to save yourself from Satan then hold on fast to the Master [Allâh ﷻ] and seek refuge in Him. On the day of resurrection, a chair of fire will be placed and Satan, may he be cursed, will sit on it. All the other devils and unbelievers will gather around him. He will speak like the braying of a donkey and say to them: “O people of the fire! How did you find what your Sustainer had promised you.” They will reply: “We found it to be true.” He will then say: “Today is a day in which I am despondent of mercy.” Allâh ﷻ will then order the angles to strike him and his followers with hammers of fire. They would then fall into Hell for forty years and will never hear the order to come out of it forever. We seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from it. It is mentioned that Satan will be brought forward on the day of resurrection and he will be ordered to sit on a chair of fire with a necklace of curse around his neck. Allâh ﷻ will order the *zabâniyah* (angels appointed to fling the damned into Hell) to drag him out from that chair and to fling him into Hell-fire. They will go and grab him in order to fling him but they will not be able to do so. Allâh ﷻ will then

order Jibra'îl ﷺ together with 80 000 angels to do that but they will not be able to do so. Allâh ﷻ will then order Isrâfîl ﷺ and then 'Izrâ'îl ﷺ - each of them with 80 000 angels but they will not be able to do so. Allâh ﷻ will then say to all of them: "Even if several times the angels which I have created got together in order to fling him into Hell, they will not be able to do so as long as the necklace of curse is around his neck."

It is related that Satan's name in the lowest heaven was *al-Âbid* – the one who worships [Allâh ﷻ]. In the second heaven his name was *az-Zâhid* – the one who is an ascetic. In the third heaven his name was *al-Ârif* – the one who has recognized [Allâh ﷻ]. In the fourth heaven his name was *al-Walîyy* – the one who is a friend [of Allâh ﷻ]. In the fifth heaven his name was *at-Taqîyy* – the one who fears [Allâh ﷻ]. In the sixth heaven his name was *al-Khâzin* – the one who is a treasurer. In the seventh heaven his name was *'Azâzîl*. In the *al-Lauh al-Mahfûz* (the Preserved Tablet) his name was Iblîs. All along, he was unmindful of his final destiny. Allâh ﷻ ordered him to prostrate before Âdam ﷺ. He replied: "Are You giving him superiority over me whereas I am better than him? You created me from fire while You created him from soil." Allâh ﷻ replied: "I do whatever I will." Satan considered himself to be superior and therefore turned his back to Âdam ﷺ out of pride and haughtiness. He remained standing stubbornly while the angels prostrated. When they raised their heads and saw that he did not prostrate while they were in prostration, they fell into prostration a second time in order to express their gratitude to Allâh ﷻ. Satan remained disinterested in them, not intending to follow them nor remorseful over his refusal. And so, Allâh ﷻ distorted his beautiful appearance to that like a pig. His head was like that of a camel, his chest like the hump of a camel, his face was between these two like that of a monkey, his eyes were split vertically along the length of his face, his nostrils were open like the cup of a cupper, his lips were like that of an ox, his teeth were sticking out like those of a pig, his beard had seven strands of hair. Allâh ﷻ then expelled him from Paradise, in fact from the skies, in fact from the earth to the islands. He therefore only enters earth very stealthily. Allâh ﷻ cursed him

till the day of recompense because he became of the unbelievers. Now look at him: he had a beautiful appearance, four wings, abundant knowledge, engaged in abundant worship [of Allâh ﷻ], the peacock of the angels and the greatest one among them, the leader of the archangels, and various other accolades. But none of these availed him in any way whatsoever. In this is an admonition and a reminder.

It is stated in a Tradition that when Satan became deluded, Jibra'il ﷺ and Mîkâ'il ﷺ began crying. Allâh ﷻ asked them: "Why are you crying?" They replied: "O our Sustainer! We do not feel safe from Your delusion." Allâh ﷻ replied: "This is how you should always be. Do not feel safe from My delusion."

It is related that Satan said: "O my Sustainer! You expelled me from Paradise because of Âdam. I cannot overpower him unless You give me power over him." Allâh ﷻ said: "I give you power over him, i.e. over his progeny because the Prophets are protected [by Allâh ﷻ]." Satan said: "Give me more power." Allâh ﷻ said: "Every time a child is born from Âdam's progeny, two from your progeny will be born." Satan said: "Give me more power." Allâh ﷻ said: "Their chests will be your abodes. You can flow through them as blood flows through the body." Satan said: "Give me more power." Allâh ﷻ said: "You may take help against them from your aides who are either riders or walkers. You may cause them to earn and spend their wealth in unlawful ways. You may induce them to get children through unlawful means, e.g. intercourse during menstrual periods. You may urge them towards polytheism by naming their children with names like 'Abd al-'Uzzâ [name of an idol], you can lead them astray by causing them to follow deviant religions, undertaking despicable occupations, doing reprehensible deeds, by making false promises to them such as having hopes in the intercession of gods and relying on the honour and nobility of forefathers, and by delaying repentance through long hopes." All this was said to him like a threat, e.g. when you say to a person: "Do whatever you like [I am not bothered, for you will see the consequences thereof]."

On hearing the above conversation, Âdam ﷺ said: “O my Sustainer! You have given him such power over me that I cannot repulse him except through Your help.” Allâh ﷻ said: “If any child is born from your progeny, I will appoint angels to safeguard him.” Âdam ﷺ said: “Give me more.” Allâh ﷻ said: “The reward of good deeds will be multiplied ten-fold.” Âdam ﷺ said: “Give me more.” Allâh ﷻ said: “I will not remove from your progeny the ability to repent as long as their souls remain in their bodies.” Âdam ﷺ said: “Give me more.” Allâh ﷻ said: “I will forgive them openly.” Âdam ﷺ said: “You have given me enough.”

Satan said: “O my Sustainer! You appointed Messengers among the progeny of Âdam and revealed Books to them. So who are my messengers?” Allâh ﷻ said: “The fortune tellers.” Satan said: “And what are my books?” Allâh ﷻ said: “Tattoos.” Satan said: “What is my Hadîth?” Allâh ﷻ said: “Lies.” Satan said: “What is my Qur’ân?” Allâh ﷻ said: “Poetry.” Satan said: “Who is my *mu’adhdhin* (one who calls towards prayer)?” Allâh ﷻ said: “Flutes (musical instruments).” Satan said: “What is my masjid?” Allâh ﷻ said: “The market places.” Satan said: “What is my house?” Allâh ﷻ said: “The toilet.” Satan said: “What is my food?” Allâh ﷻ said: “The food on which My name is not taken.” Satan said: “What is my drink?” Allâh ﷻ said: “Intoxicating drinks.” Satan said: “What are my snares [and traps]?” Allâh said: “Women.”

ON TRUSTWORTHINESS

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ
فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا

“We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to bear it and they were afraid of it.” (Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 72)

In other words, they will not be able to fulfil it, and would thereby be eligible for the wrath of Allâh ﷻ. Alternatively, they feared that they would breach this trust. The meaning of *amânah* (trustworthiness) in this verse is obedience and religious duties which result in either reward [for carrying them out] or punishment [for not carrying them out]. Al-Qurtubî said: “Trustworthiness encompasses all the duties of Islam. This is the unanimous opinion of the ‘ulamâ’. But there are differences with regard to certain details.” Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ said: “This refers to trustworthiness in matters of wealth such as items kept for safekeeping, etc.”

It is also related from Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ that trustworthiness is applicable in all religious duties, but that the severest of all is trustworthiness in matters of wealth.

Abû Dardâ’ ؓ said: “Taking a bath after being in a state of impurity is also an act of trustworthiness.”

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ said: “The first thing that Allâh ﷻ created from man was his private part. On creating it, He said: ‘This is a trust which I have given you custody of. You should therefore not taint it with anything but what is right. If you safeguard this trust, I will safeguard you.’” The private part is thus a trust, the ears are a trust, the eyes are a trust, the tongue is a trust, the

stomach is a trust, the hands and feet are trusts. The person who does not possess this quality of trustworthiness is actually devoid of î mân.

Al-Hasan said: "Trustworthiness was presented to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they trembled at accepting it because of the heavy responsibility. Allâh ﷻ said to them: "If you do well, I will reward you, if you do bad, I will punish you." They replied: "No. [We do not want this responsibility]." Mujâhid said: "When Allâh ﷻ created Âdam ﷺ, he presented it to him and also said the same thing to him." Âdam ﷺ said: "I will bear its responsibility." It is clear that offering this trustworthiness to the heavens, earth and mountains was one of choice and not an imposition. Had it been imposed upon them, they would not have refused to bear it. Al-Qufâl and others said: "The presentation that is mentioned in this verse is actually a parable. In other words, the heavens, the earth and the mountains, despite their massive bodies, had it been possible to bear them with this responsibility, they would have felt it too heavy because of the great responsibility there is in fulfilling the dictates of the Sharî'ah and the reward and punishment that all this entails. In other words, bearing such a responsibility is such a serious matter that even the heavens, the earth and the mountains ought to fail to bear it. Man took up this responsibility. Allâh ﷻ says: "Man undertook to bear it." In other words, Âdam ﷺ accepted this responsibility after it was offered to him in the world of progenies when his progeny was issuing forth from him, and when Allâh ﷻ took the covenant from them. "He is very merciless, ignorant." [45] In other words, in bearing this responsibility, he has been very merciless to himself. He is also ignorant of the seriousness of what he has borne, or he is ignorant of the order of his Sustainer.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ relates: "Trustworthiness was presented to Âdam ﷺ and he was told: "Accept it together with its responsibilities. If you obey, I will forgive you but if you disobey, I will punish you." He replied: "I accept it together with its responsibilities." The time between 'asr (afternoon) and the night of that day did not even pass when Âdam ﷺ ate of the forbidden tree. Had it not been for the fact that Allâh ﷻ saved him with His mercy, accepted his repentance and guided him, [he would have been destroyed].

The word *amânah* (trustworthiness) is derived from the word *îmân*. Therefore, the person who safeguards the trust of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ will safeguard his *îmân*. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who does not possess the quality of trustworthiness is actually devoid of *îmân*. And the person who does not possess the quality of fulfilling trusts is actually devoid of Islam.”

A poet says:

تبا لمن رضي الخيانة مهيعا - وازور عن صون الأمانة جانبه
رفض الديانة والمروءة فاغتدى - تترى عليه من الزمان مصائبه



“Destruction to that person who is pleased with treachery as a way of life. Who alienates himself from safeguarding [the quality of] trustworthiness. He rejects piety and a sense of honour. The afflictions of time therefore fall upon him one after the other.”




Another poet says:




أخلق بمن رضي الخيانة شيمة - أن لا يرى إلا صريع حوادث
ما زالت الأرزاء ينزل بؤسها - أبدا بغادر ذمة أو ناكث

“Can the person who adopts treachery as his trait ever be considered to be a suitable person? That he is always seen to be overpowered by calamities. Calamities continuously afflict with their torments that person who acts treacherously with regard to a responsibility [which he is shouldered with] or that person who violates a trust.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The believer has a natural disposition for every characteristic except treachery and lying.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “My *ummah* will always experience goodness as long as it does not consider trustworthiness to be an item of value [and therefore very rare] and as long as it does not consider charity to be a tax.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Fulfil the trust to the one who has faith in you, and do not act treacherously towards the one who acts treacherously towards you.”

The *Sahîh* of Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate on the authority of Abû Hurayrah  who said that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “The signs of a hypocrite are three: (1) When he speaks, he lies. (2) When he promises, he breaks his promise. (3) When he is entrusted, he acts treacherously.” In other words, if anyone entrusts him with a secret, he acts treacherously by mentioning the secret to others. When he is entrusted with an item, he acts treacherously by refusing to acknowledge it, by not safeguarding it as it ought to be safeguarded, and by using it without permission.

The safeguarding of trusts is an attribute of the close angels, the Prophets, the Messengers and a characteristic of the pious and righteous servants. Allâh  says: “Allâh commands you to fulfil the trusts to their rightful owners.” The commentators state that this verse comprises many fundamentals of the Sharî‘ah and that the addressees of this verse are the general masses, the leaders and everyone else. It is the duty of the leaders to mete out justice on behalf of the oppressed and to display his rights for this is a trust. It is also their duty to protect the belongings of the Muslims, especially of the orphans. It is the duty of the ‘*ulamâ*’ to teach the masses the injunctions of Islam. It is a trust for whose protection Allâh  chose the ‘*ulamâ*’. It is the duty of the father to watch his children by ensuring that he teaches them proper manners. This is a trust on his shoulder. The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Each one of you is a shepherd, and each one of you is accountable for his flock.”

It is stated in *Zahr ar-Riyâd* that a person will be brought forward on the day of resurrection. He will be made to stand before Allâh . Allâh  will ask him: “Did you reject the trust of such and such person?” He will reply: “No. O my Sustainer!” Allâh  will order an angel to hold this person by his hand and to take him to the Hell-fire. He will then show him trustworthiness in its physical form in the depth of the Hell-fire. He will then continue falling into it for 70 years until he reaches its depth. He will then climb up with trustworthiness. When he reaches the uppermost portion of the Hell-fire, his feet will slip and he will fall into it again for the same number of years. He will then climb up and fall again. This will continue till the kindness of his Sustainer gets hold of him through the intercession of

the Messenger ﷺ. The person to whom he owed that trust will then be pleased with him.

Salamah رضي الله عنه narrates: While we were sitting with the Prophet ﷺ, a *janâzah* (dead body) was brought so that the *salâh* may be performed for it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Does he have any debts?” The people replied: “No.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then performed the *salâh*. Thereafter, another *janâzah* was brought. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Does he have any debts?” The people replied: “Yes.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Has he left behind anything?” The people replied: “Three dinars.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then performed the *salâh*. Thereafter a third *janâzah* was brought. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Does he have any debts?” The people replied: “Yes.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Has he left behind anything?” The people replied: “No.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “You may perform the *salâh* for your companion [I am not going to do so].”

Qatâdah رضي الله عنه says that a person asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! If I were to be killed in the cause of Allâh while I endure [the hardships of fighting] patiently, expecting reward [from Allâh ﷻ], moving forward, not fleeing [from the battlefield], will Allâh ﷻ wipe out from me my sins?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Yes.” When the person turned to leave, he called him back and said: “Allâh ﷻ will forgive every sin of a martyr except for debts.”

ON OFFERING SALÂH WITH SUBMISSION AND HUMILITY

Allâh ﷻ says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ

“Successful indeed are the believers. Who are humble in their salâh.”
(Sûrah al-Mu’minûn, 23: 1-2)

You should know that there are those who consider humility from among the acts of the heart, like fear and dread. While there are those who consider it to be from among the acts of the limbs, like remaining still, abstaining from turning about and playing about. The scholars differ with regard to it being from among the compulsory injunctions of salâh or from among its merits. Those who consider it to be compulsory cite the following Hadîth as their proof: “It is not lawful for a person to do anything but that which confines him in salâh.” And the Qur’ânic verse: “Establish the salâh for My remembrance.” [46] Negligence [and absent mindedness] are the opposites of remembrance. It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ said: “Do not be of those who are negligent.” [47]

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates on the authority of Muhammad ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh* who said: I have been informed that when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to offer salâh, he would raise his eyes towards the sky. And so the verse was revealed. ‘Abdur Razzâq adds: [Allâh ﷻ] ordered him with humility. He therefore directed his eyes towards the spot of his prostration. Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate on the authority of Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه who said: “When he ﷺ used to offer salâh, he would raise his eyes towards the sky. This verse was then revealed. He therefore lowered his head.”

It is narrated on the authority of al-Hasan that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The similitude of the five salâhs are like a copiously flowing stream flowing in

front of the house of one of you, wherein he takes a bath five times each day. Will any filth remain on his body?” In other words, the salâhs purify him from sins – none of them remain apart from major sins. This is if the person offers his salâh with humility and presence of heart. If not, the salâh is flung back at him.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who offers two rak‘ats (units) of salâh without thinking about anything of this world therein, his previous sins are forgiven.”


The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The salâh has been made compulsory, the pilgrimage and circuiting (*tawâf*) [of the Ka‘bah] has been ordered, and the other rites of the pilgrimage have been promulgated in order to establish the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. So if this objective and purpose is not found in this heart of yours, and if you have no awe and dread for [Allâh ﷻ], then of what value is this remembrance of yours?”



The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person whose salâh does not prohibit him from shamelessness and evil will be distancing himself further away from Allâh ﷻ.”



Bakr ibn ‘Abdillâh said: “O man! If you want to go to your Master without seeking permission and speak to Him without any interpreter, you can do so.” He was asked: “How is that possible?” He replied: “You must perform a perfect ablution and enter your place of salâh. If you do so, you would have entered on your Master without seeking permission and you would be speaking to Him without any interpreter.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to engage in conversations with us and we would converse with him. But when the time of salâh came, it was as though he did not know us and we did not know him because he was so engrossed in the grandeur of Allâh ﷻ.”


The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ does not look at the salâh wherein the person does not enter with his heart and body together.”


When Ibrâhîm  used to offer salâh, the trembling of his heart could be heard for two miles. When Sa‘îd at-Tanûkhî used to offer salâh, his tears would not stop flowing from his cheeks to his beard.



The Messenger of Allâh  saw a person playing with his beard while he was in salâh, so he said: “Had this person’s heart submitted [before Allâh ], his body parts would also have submitted [and he would have remained still in his salâh].”


It is related that when the time of salâh approached, ‘Alî  would tremble and the colour of his face would change. Someone would ask him: “What is wrong, O leader of the faithful!” He would reply: “The time has come for a trust which Allâh  offered to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it, and were afraid of it. Whereas I [man], bore this responsibility.”



It is related that when ‘Alî ibn al-Husayn used to perform the ablution, his face would turn yellow. His family members would ask him: “What is this that overtakes you at the time of performing ablution?” He would reply: “Do you know in front of whom I intend standing?”


It is related that Hâtim al-Asamm was asked about his salâh. He replied: “When the time of salâh comes, I perform a complete ablution, go to the spot where I want to offer salâh and then sit down there till my limbs are fully settled. I then stand up for salâh with this in mind that the Ka‘bah is in front of me, the *sirât* (the bridge over Hell which every single person will have to cross) is beneath me, Paradise is to my right, Hell-fire is to my left, the angel of death is behind me, and that this is my last salâh. I then have both hope and fear in my heart. I then say *Allâhu Akbar* (Allâh is the greatest) with determination, I recite the Qur’ân with deliberation, I bow down with humility, I prostrate with submission, I sit on my left foot with its upper surface spread on the ground while my right foot is upright, resting on its big toe. I then follow this salâh with total devotion [to Allâh ]. Thereafter, I do not know whether this salâh has been accepted from me or not.”


Ibn ‘Abbâs  said: “Two rak‘ats of salâh of average length offered with reflection are better than offering salâh the entire night while the heart is neglectful.”


The Messenger of Allâh  said: “There will come towards the end of time people from my *ummah* who will come to the musjids, sitting therein in circles. They will only talk about the world and love for the world. Do not sit in their company for Allâh  has no need for such people.”

Al-Hasan narrates that the Prophet  asked: “Should I not inform you of the worst thief?” They asked: “Who is he, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “He is the one who steals from his salâh.” They asked: “How does he steal from his salâh?” He replied: “He does not perform the bowing and prostrating postures of salâh with perfection.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Salâh is the first thing a person will be reckoned for on the day of resurrection. If he performed it with perfection, the reckoning will be made easy for him. But if there was any shortcoming in it, Allâh  will say to His angels: ‘Does this servant of Mine have any optional salâh. If he has, complete the compulsory salâh with it.’”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “A servant does not receive a greater gift than the permission to offer two rak‘ats of salâh which he performs.”

When ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb  would intend to offer salâh, his body parts would tremble and his teeth would chatter. Someone asked him about this so he replied: “The time has come to fulfil a trust and to perform a duty. And I do not know how I am fulfilling it.”

It is related with regard to Khalaf ibn Ayyûb that he was standing in salâh when a hornet stung him. Blood began to flow [from that sting] without his even perceiving it. This continued until Ibn Sa‘îd came out and informed him thereof. He then washed his garment. Someone said to him: “A hornet stings you, blood flows from your body and you still did not perceive all this?!” He replied: “Can a person even perceive such a thing when he is standing before the Mighty King [Allâh ], when the angel of death is

directly behind him, when the Hell-fire is to his left and the *sirât* is beneath him?!”

A gangrenous sore appeared on the hand of ‘Amr ibn Dharr. He was a very ascetic person who was fully engaged in the worship [of Allâh ﷻ]. The physicians said to him: “This hand will have to be cut off.” He said to them: “Cut it off.” They replied: “We will have to tie you with ropes before cutting it off.” He replied: “Instead of that, when I commence my *salâh*, you must cut it off.” When he commenced his *salâh*, his hand was cut off without his even perceiving it.”

ON COMMANDING GOOD AND PROHIBITING EVIL

Anas ibn Mâlik رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who sends one salutation to me, Allâh ﷻ creates from the breath of the person a white cloud. Allâh ﷻ then commands it to take from the ocean of mercy. It takes thereof and Allâh ﷻ then commands it to rain down [the mercy]. It then rains down. Whichever drop falls on land, Allâh ﷻ creates gold from there. Whichever drop falls on a mountain, Allâh ﷻ creates silver from there. Whichever drop falls on an unbeliever, Allâh ﷻ blesses him with *îmân*.”



Allâh ﷻ says: “You are the best of nations, appointed for mankind.” [\[48\]](#) Al-Kalbî said: “This verse explains the position of this *ummah* in its virtue over other nations. In it is proof that this Islamic nation is the best of nations without exception. And that this superiority is shared by the early members of this *ummah* and by the latter members when compared to other nations. Even though there may be differences in status within this *ummah* as mentioned with regard to the higher status of the *Sahâbah* over others. The meaning of the word “appointed” is that this *ummah* has been appointed for the benefit and welfare of mankind in all eras to the extent that it is distinguished and recognized in this regard. The verse continues: “you command good, you prohibit evil, and you believe in Allâh.” This sentence explains why they are the best of nations and that they will remain so as long as they uphold these qualities. Allâh ﷻ thus made them the best of nations for the nations because they command good, they prohibit evil, and they fight the unbelievers so that they may believe. So their benefit goes to others. Just as the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The best of people is he who benefits people. And the worst of people is he who harms people.” The words “you believe in Allâh” mean that you affirm the oneness of Allâh ﷻ, you remain steadfast on this, and that you affirm that Muhammad ﷺ is the Prophet of Allâh ﷻ. This is because the person who






does not believe in Muhammad ﷺ actually does not believe in Allâh ﷻ because he alleges that the miraculous signs which he brought were from his own side [and not from Allâh ﷻ].




The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever from among you sees an evil should change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then with his tongue. If he is unable to do so, then with his heart. And this is the weakest stage of îman.” In other words, it is the weakest act of the believers. Some scholars are of the opinion that the duty of changing evil with the hand [physical power] rests with the rulers. With the tongue, with the ‘ulamâ’. And with the heart, with the masses. Others state that whoever is able to change the evil in whatever way, that becomes incumbent upon him. Allâh ﷻ says: “Help each other in good deeds and in piety. Do not help each other in sin and oppression.” [49] Among the ways of helping each other is to prompt others towards good, to make easy the ways of goodness, and to block the ways of evil and enmity to the best of one’s ability. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ fills with peace and îman the heart of a person who reprimands another who commits an innovation. Allâh ﷻ will give sanctuary on the day of resurrection to the person who disgraces another who commits an innovation. The person who commands good and prohibits evil is the deputy of Allâh ﷻ on earth, the deputy of His Book and the deputy of His Messenger ﷺ.”

Hudhayfah ؓ is reported to have said: “There will come upon the people a time when the dead body of a donkey would be more beloved to them than a believer who commands them and prohibits them.” Mûsâ ؑ asked: “O my Sustainer! What is the reward of the person who invites his fellow brother, commands him to do good and prohibits him from evil?” Allâh ﷻ replied: “I will record in his favour one year’s of worship for every word that he uttered and I would feel ashamed to punish him with My fire.” It is stated in a Hadîth Qudsî that Allâh ﷻ said: “O man! Do not be a person who delays repentance, has high hopes and returns in the hereafter without any [good] deeds. He speaks as though he is a great worshipper [of Allâh ﷻ] while his deeds are those of hypocrites. When he is bestowed with

bounties, he is not content. When bounties are withheld from him, he is not patient. He loves the righteous people but is not among them. He abhors the hypocrites but is among them. He commands good but does not do it himself. He prohibits evil but does not abstain from it himself.”

‘Alî  says that he heard the Messenger of Allâh  saying: “Towards the end of time such people will come who will be young in age and deficient in intelligence. They will utter the best of words which do not even go beyond their throats. They will deviate from Islam just as an arrow deviates from its target.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “On the night when I was taken up to the heavens [the night of *mi‘râj*], I saw people whose lips were being cut off with scissors of fire. I asked: ‘Who are these people, O Jibra‘îl?’ He replied: ‘These are the orators [and lecturers] from your *ummah* who command the people to do good while they forget their own selves.’ Allâh  says: “Do you order the people to piety and forget yourselves, while you read the Book? Then why do you not think?” [\[50\]](#) In other words, you recite the Book of Allâh but you do not act on what is in it. They used to order the people to give in charity while they themselves did not give in charity. It is therefore the duty of the believers to command good and prohibit evil without forgetting their own selves. Allâh  says: “The believing men and the believing women are helpers of each other. They enjoin the good and prohibit the evil, they establish *salâh*...” [\[51\]](#) Allâh  describes the believers in this verse as being those who command good. So the person who abstains from commanding good is out of this group of believers who are described in this verse. Allâh  rebukes those who abstain from commanding good. He says: “They would not prevent one another from the evil which they committed. How evil is that which they were doing!” [\[52\]](#)

It is narrated on the authority of Abû Dardâ’  who said: “You should certainly command good and certainly prohibit evil, or else, Allâh  will empower over you an oppressive ruler who neither respects your elders nor shows mercy to your youngsters. Your best people will supplicate to Allâh  but their supplications will not be answered. They will ask for help, but

no help will be given to them. They will ask for forgiveness, but they will not be forgiven.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ inflicted a punishment on a village in which there were 18 000 people who did [good] deeds like Prophets.” The Companions asked: “Why was this so, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “They would not become angry for the sake of Allâh ﷻ [when His commands were disobeyed], they did not command good and abstained from prohibiting evil.” Abû Dharr al-Ghifârî ؓ says that Abû Bakr ؓ said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Is there any jihâd apart from fighting the polytheists?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: “Yes, O Abû Bakr! Allâh ﷻ has on earth *muhâhidîn* who are better than martyrs who are alive and provided with sustenance from Allâh ﷻ. They walk on the surface of the earth while Allâh ﷻ boasts about them before the angels of Paradise. Paradise is adorned for them just as Umme Salamah beautifies herself for the Messenger of Allâh.” Abû Bakr ؓ asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who are these people?” He replied: “They are the ones who command good, prohibit evil, who love for the sake of Allâh ﷻ and hate for the sake of Allâh ﷻ.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: “I take an oath in the name of that being in whose control is my life, that such a person will be in a room above other rooms, above the rooms of the martyrs. Each room will have 300 doors made of sapphires and green emeralds. Each door will have a special light. The person will marry 300 000 maidens of Paradise (*hûrs*) who would lower their gazes. Each time he turns to one of them and looks at her, she will say to him: ‘Do you remember such and such day in which you commanded good and prohibited evil?’ Each time he turns to one of them, she will remind him of the place in which he commanded good and prohibited evil.”

It is stated in a Tradition that Allâh ﷻ said: “O Mûsâ! Did you ever do any deed for My sake?” Mûsâ ؑ replied: “I offered salâh for You, I kept fast for You, I gave in charity for Your sake, I prostrated before You, I praised You, I recited Your Book and I remembered You.” Allâh ﷻ said: “O Mûsâ! As for the salâh, it is a proof for you. As for fasting, it is a shield for you.

As for charity, you shall receive shade for that. As for glorifying Me, you shall receive trees in Paradise for that. As for your reciting My Book, you shall receive the maidens of Paradise and palaces for that. As for remembering Me, you shall receive illumination for that. Now what have you done solely for Me?" Mûsâ ﷺ replied: "O my Sustainer! Show me a deed which I can do solely for You." Allâh ﷻ replied: "O Mûsâ! Have you ever befriended a friend solely for Me? Have you ever considered someone to be an enemy solely for Me?" Mûsâ ﷺ thus realized that the greatest of deeds is loving solely for the pleasure of Allâh and hating his enemies solely for the pleasure of Allâh.

Abû 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh ؓ said: "I asked, O Messenger of Allâh! Which martyr is the most honourable in the sight of Allâh ﷻ?" He replied: "A person who stands before an unjust ruler and commands him to do good and prohibits him from evil. [On hearing this], the unjust ruler kills him. If he does not kill him, his deeds are not recorded as long as he lives."

Al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahmatullâhi 'alayh* said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The best martyr from my *ummah* is a person who stands before an unjust ruler and commands him to do good and prohibits him from evil, and so he kills him for that. The position of such a martyr is in Paradise between Hamzah ؓ and Ja'far ؓ."

Allâh ﷻ inspired to Yûsha' ibn Nûn ؑ saying to him: "I am going to destroy 40 000 of the best people from your nation and 60 000 of the worst people from your nation." He replied: "O my Sustainer! It is understood if you destroy the worst ones. But what is wrong with the best ones [that You are destroying them]?" Allâh ﷻ replied: "They did not get angry for My sake. Instead they used to eat and drink with these evil ones [without prohibiting them from their evil]."

Anas ؓ relates: "We asked: 'O Messenger of Allâh! Should we not command good only when we ourselves act on all good deeds first? And should we not prohibit evil only when we ourselves abstain from all evil deeds firsts?'" The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: "You should command

good even if you do not practice on all of it yourselves. And you should prohibit evil even if you do not abstain from all of it yourselves.”

A person advised his sons with the following: “If any of you decides to command good, he should habituate himself to remain patient and rely on Allâh ﷻ for reward. This is because the person who relies on Allâh ﷻ for reward, he will not feel any pain and difficulty.”

ON THE ENMITY OF SATAN

It is the duty of a believer to love the '*ulamâ*' and the righteous, to constantly sit in their company, to ask necessary questions, to take admonition from their words of advice, to abstain from evil deeds, and to consider Satan to be an enemy. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا

“Satan is certainly an enemy to you. So consider him to be an enemy.”
(Sûrah Fâtir, 35: 6)

In other words, consider him to be an enemy by obeying Allâh ﷻ, do not obey him in matters that entail the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ, be cautious of him in all your matters, actions and beliefs from the depths of your hearts. When you do an act, be vigilant of him for he would probably incorporate showing off in that act and would beautify evil deeds before you. Seek assistance from your Sustainer against him.

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ drew a line and said: “This is the path of Allâh ﷻ.” He then drew lines to the right and left of this line and said: “On each of these paths that are running across is a Satan who is inviting towards it.” He then recited this verse: “This is My straight path. Follow it, then, and do not follow other paths which would deviate you from the path of Allâh.”[53] The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ thus explained to us the numerous paths of Satan.

It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said: “There was a monk from the Banî Isrâ’îl. Satan went to a young girl, throttled her and put it into the minds of the people that she can only be treated by this monk. They therefore took her to him. He refused to accept her. But they persisted until he accepted. When she was with him for her treatment, Satan beautified for him her closeness [to him]. Satan continued doing so until the monk had intercourse

with her and she fell pregnant. Satan then whispered thoughts into his mind and said to him: “Now you are going to be disgraced. Her family people are going to come, you should therefore kill her. If they ask you about her, tell them that she passed away.” So he killed her and buried her. Satan then went to her family and whispered into their hearts saying: “The monk made her pregnant, killed her and then buried her.” Her family members went to the monk and asked him about their daughter. He replied that she passed away. They grabbed him in order to kill him. Satan went to the monk and said to him: “I am the one who throttled her and I am the one who put it into the minds of the people to bring her to you. You should therefore obey me and you will be saved. I am the one who can rescue you from them.” The monk asked: “What must I do?” Satan replied: “Prostrate before me two times.” The monk did this and Satan said: “I distance myself from you.” It is with regard to this that Allâh ﷻ says: “Similar to the norm of Satan when he says to man: ‘Become an unbeliever.’ Once he becomes an unbeliever, he says: ‘I distance myself from you.’” [\[54\]](#)

It is related that Satan asked Imâm Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh*: “What do you have to say about that being who created me as he liked, used me in whatever he liked, and after that, he has the right to admit me into Paradise if he wills or into Hell-fire if he wills? Would you say that he has acted justly or wrongly?” Imâm Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* pondered over this question and said: “If he created you for whatever you wish, then he has wronged you. If he created you for whatever he wishes, then he is not questioned about whatever he does.” On hearing this, he dwindled till he became nothing. He then said: “O Shâfi‘î, I take an oath by Allâh, that through this question of mine I have removed 70 000 ardent worshippers from the register of worship.”

You should know that the heart is like a fort and that Satan is an enemy who wants to get into this fort, take possession of it and control it. In order to safeguard the fort from the enemy, its doors, entrances and gaps will have to be guarded. The person who does not know these doors [and entrances] cannot guard them. So safeguarding the heart from the whisperings of Satan is an incumbent duty on every person. The means to fulfilling an incumbent duty are also incumbent. In order to repulse Satan, a person has to have full knowledge of how he enters the hearts. Having knowledge of these

entrances is therefore an incumbent duty. The entrances and doors through which Satan enters are actually attributes of a person. And these are many.

Among them are anger and lust. Anger is the disaster of the intellect. When the intellect becomes weak, the armies of Satan attack. Whenever man becomes angry, Satan plays with him just as a child plays with a ball. It is mentioned that a pious servant of Allâh ﷺ asked Satan: "Show me how you overpower man." He replied: "I overpower him at the time of anger and when he follows his lust."

Among them is the attribute of intense greed. As long as a person is desirous of everything, his greed makes him blind and deaf. It is at this time that Satan finds an opportunity. He beautifies before a greedy person everything that would convey him to his desire, even though it may be an evil and immoral act.

It is related that when Nûh ﷺ boarded the ship, he carried with him a pair from each species as Allâh ﷻ had ordered him. He then saw an old man on the ship whom he did not recognize. Nûh ﷺ said to him: "Why have you come aboard?" He replied: "I have come in order to afflict the hearts of your companions. Their hearts will thus be under my control while their bodies will be under your control." Nûh ﷺ said: "Get out from here, O enemy of Allâh! Surely you are the accursed [Satan]." Satan said to him: "There are five things with which I destroy man. I will inform you of three of those things and not inform you of the other two." Allâh ﷻ inspired to Nûh ﷺ saying: "You do not need to know those three things. But tell him to inform you of the other two." So Nûh ﷺ said to him: "What are those two things?" Satan replied: "They are two things that cannot be rejected. They are two things that cannot remain behind. They are the things with which I destroy people. The two things are greed and jealousy. It was through jealousy that I was cursed and became accursed. As for greed: the entire Paradise was made lawful to Âdam except for one tree. It was through greed that I was able to delude him."

Among them is eating a stomach full, even though the food may be lawful and pure. This is because eating a stomach full strengthens the desires and

these desires are the weapons of Satan.

It is related that Satan came before Yahyâ عليه السلام. The latter saw that Satan had plucks of everything on his body. He asked him: “O Satan! What are these plucks?” He replied: “These are the desires with which I hunt mankind.” Yahyâ عليه السلام asked: “Do you have any of my plucks there?” He replied: “Perhaps you ate a stomach full which caused you to feel heavy and uncomfortable in offeringsalâh and remembering Allâh ﷻ.” Yahyâ عليه السلام asked: “Is there anything else?” He replied: “No.” Yahyâ عليه السلام said: “I take an oath that I will never fill my stomach with food.” Satan said to him: “I take an oath that I will never advise a Muslim.”

Among them is the love to have beautiful utensils, clothing and to adorn and decorate the house. When Satan sees that this quality has overpowered the heart of a particular person, he settles down and establishes himself in that person’s heart. He then continually invites him towards building the house, beautifying its roofs and walls, expanding it, etc. He also invites him towards beautifying himself with clothing and animals. He causes the person to undergo losses throughout his life in fulfilling all these demands. Once he gets him involved in all this, he does not have to go that person a second time because these very demands [and desires] lead him to fulfil other demands. This continues till his death. He thus dies in the path of Satan and in following his desires. An evil destiny is thus feared from all this. We seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ.

Among them is greed with people. Safwân ibn Sulaym narrated that Satan came before ‘Abdullâh ibn Hanzalah and said to him: “O Ibn Hanzalah! Remember this one thing which I will teach you.” He replied: “I have no need for what you have to say.” Satan said: “At least listen [to what I have to say]. If you think it is good, you may accept it. If not, you may reject it. O Ibn Hanzalah! Do not ask anyone apart from Allâh with earnestness. And watch what your condition is when you become angry. Because I take possession of you when you become angry.”

Among them is haste and not remaining steadfast in matters. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hastiness is from Satan while watchfulness

[and prudence] is from Allâh ﷻ.” It is at the time of haste that Satan spreads his evil on man from avenues he does not even realize.

It is related that when ‘Îsâ ibn Maryam ﷺ was born, all the smaller devils came to Satan and said to him: “All the idols have bowed their heads.” Satan said: “Some great event has taken place. Wait here [I am coming just now].” He flew from east to west but did not find anything. He then discovered that ‘Îsâ ﷺ had just been born and that the angels had completely surrounded him. Satan returned to the smaller devils and said: “A Prophet has been born last night. Whenever a woman fell pregnant and gave birth, I was certain to be present there. Except for this particular birth. You should therefore not have much hope of idols being worshipped after today. However, you may approach [and entice] mankind through hastiness and frivolity.”

Among them are dirhams, dînârs and all types of wealth including merchandise, animals and properties. The more a person has over and above his essential amount of food and basic needs, the more Satan finds a place to inhabit [a person’s life]. Thâbit al-Bunânî said: “When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was commissioned as a Prophet, Satan said to his smaller devils: “A certain incident has taken place. Go and see what it is.” They all dispersed and searched until they could discover nothing. They returned to him and said: “We do not know.” Satan said to them: “I will go and bring you some information.” He went and returned, and said to them: “Allâh has commissioned Muhammad ﷺ.” Satan then began dispatching his smaller devils to the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ [in order to delude them], but these devils would return losers and say: “We have never met anyone like this before. We delude them and then they stand up for their salâh. This salâh then wipes out whatever we achieved.” Satan said to them: “Be a bit patient with regard to them. Perhaps Allâh will open the world to them [by giving them material wealth], we will then be able to achieve our goals from them.”

Among them are stinginess and fear of poverty. It is these qualities that prevent a person from spending and giving in charity. It is these qualities that urge man towards hoarding, accumulating and a painful punishment.

From among the calamities of stinginess is the intense desire to remain in the market places [and businesses] in order to amass wealth. And these market places [and businesses] are the nesting places of Satan and his armies.

Among them is fanaticism in particular ways of thinking and desires, in bearing malice towards adversaries, and looking down at them. These are qualities that destroy both – the worshippers [of Allâh ﷻ] and also those who disobey Him. Al-Hasan رضي الله عنه said: “It has reached us that Satan said: ‘I enticed the followers of Muhammad ﷺ with sins, but they broke my back with seeking forgiveness [from Allâh ﷻ]. I then enticed them with sins for which they do not seek forgiveness from Allâh. These sins are desires.’ The accursed Satan is correct in this regard because they do not know that these are among the means that drags them towards sins. How, then, can they seek forgiveness?!”

Among them is harbouring bad thoughts about Muslims. It is necessary to abstain from this and to abstain from accusing evil people. Whenever you see a person harbouring evil thoughts about people in order to look for their faults, you should know that he is internally depraved. And that this depravity of his is rearing itself from within him. It is therefore the duty of man to sever these avenues from the heart. Engaging in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ will help him in this regard.

Ibn Ishâq said: When the unbelievers from the Quraysh saw the Companions رضي الله عنهم emigrating, and they realized that Muhammad ﷺ now has Companions from other tribes, they became wary of his emigration, and they knew that he has now decided to go to war against them. The Quraysh therefore gathered in *Dâr an-Nadwah* which was actually the house of Qusayy ibn Kilâb. It was given this name of *Dâr an-Nadwah* because members used to gather there and confer with each other. The Quraysh would never decide any matter but in this place. They would not admit a non-Qurayshî if he had not yet reached the age of 40. A Qurayshî younger than that would be admitted. They admitted Abû Jahl and gathered on a Saturday. It is for this reason that Saturday is referred to as a day of plotting and deception. Satan also joined them. He appeared in the form of a Najdî

shaykh. He was able to enter by standing at the entrance of the house in the form of a senior shaykh, wearing a four-sided garment of course fabric or one that was made of silk. They asked him: "From where is the shaykh?" Satan replied: "From Najd. I heard the reason for which you have gathered, so I came in order to hear what you have to say. Perhaps my opinion and advice will also be heard." They said: "You may enter." He then entered and they began conferring with regard to the Prophet ﷺ. They were a hundred of them. According to others, they were 15. Abû al-Buhayrî, who was killed as an unbeliever in the battle of Badr said: "Tie him [Muhammad ﷺ] in chains and lock the door to the room in which he is. Then wait, just as what had happened to the poets before him." The Najdî shaykh said: "This is not a good idea. By Allâh, if you tie him in chains and lock him up, his Companions will certainly come to know of this. They will then pounce on you and rescue him from your very hands. A large number will then rally around him and they will overpower you. This is not a good idea. You should rather think of some other way."

Al-Aswad ibn Rabî'ah ibn 'Amr al-Âmirî said: "We will take him out of our midst and banish him from our land. We will then not bother about where he goes to." The Najdî shaykh, may Allâh curse him, said: "By Allâh, this is not a good idea. Don't you see how well he speaks, what a sweet tongue he has, and how he subdues the hearts of people with what he says? By Allâh, if you do this, I would expect him to go to one of the Arab tribes, he would then subdue them with his talks, they would follow him against you, he would then come with them against you, they would then snatch away your authority from your very hands, and they would do to you whatever he likes. You should rather think of some other idea."

Abû Jahl said: "By Allâh, I have a very good idea concerning him. I do not think you ever thought about it. I think you should take a young lad who is strong, of high and well-balance lineage from each tribe. Each of these youngsters should then be given an extremely sharp sword. They should then go to him, strike him as a single person and kill him. We would then have dispensed with him. The shedding of his blood would be shared by all the tribes, so the Banû 'Abd Manâf will not be able to fight against all the tribes, and we will not have to pay the blood money to them."

The Najdî shaykh, may Allâh curse him, said: “This is the best idea. I cannot think of any other opinion.” So they all agreed to kill the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and they dispersed from there. Jibra’îl عليه السلام then went to the Prophet ﷺ and said to him: “Tonight you should not sleep on the bed which you normally sleep on.” When night came, the unbelievers gathered at his door, waiting for him to fall asleep so that they could pounce on him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered ‘Alî عليه السلام to sleep in his place. He covered himself with a green garment belonging to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Later on, ‘Alî عليه السلام used to wear this garment for the Friday and ‘Îd prayers. ‘Alî عليه السلام was thus the first person who ransomed himself for the sake of Allâh ﷻ and thereby protected the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. ‘Alî عليه السلام says the following poem in this regard:

وقيت بنفسي خير من وطىء الثرى - ومن طاف بالبيت العتيق وبالحجر
رسول إله خاف أن يمكروا به - فنجاه ذو الطول الإله من المكر
وبات رسول الله في الغار آمنا - موقى وفي حفظ الإله وفي ستر
وبت أراعيهم وما يتموني - وقد وطنت نفسي على القتل والأسر

“I protected with my self, the best who walked on land, the best who circuited the Ancient House [Ka‘bah] and the [Black] stone. The Messenger of Allâh feared that they were plotting against him. So the almighty Allâh rescued him from the plot. The Messenger of Allâh slept peacefully in the cave – he was fully protected under the protection and cover of Allâh. I spent the night being cautious of them, and they did not expect me [to be there]. I had already accustomed my self to be prepared for death and imprisonment.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then came out through the door while Allâh ﷻ had snatched away their eyesight. Not a single one from among them saw him. He then sprinkled some soil which he had in his hand, onto their heads. At the same time, he was reading these words of Allâh ﷻ: “Yâ

Sîn... Then We covered them from above, so they cannot see anything.”
[55]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then proceeded to wherever he intended to go. In the meantime, a person who was not with this group [that intended to kill Muhammad ﷺ] came to them and asked them: “What are you waiting for over here?” They replied: “Muhammad.” He said: “Allâh made you losers. By Allâh, he came out before you and did not leave you without placing some soil on each of your heads. He then proceeded to wherever he intended. Don’t you see what you have?” Each of them began placing his hand on his head and he found soil on it. They then began peeping into the house and they saw ‘Alî ؑ on the bed, covered with the garment of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. They said to themselves: “This is certainly Muhammad who is sleeping with his garment on himself.” They continued thinking this to themselves till morning. ‘Alî ؑ then got up from the bed. When they saw him, they said: “The person who came and informed us was correct.” It was with regard to this incident that Allâh ﷻ revealed this verse: “When the unbelievers plotted against you in order to take you captive or kill you or expel you. They plotted and Allâh also plotted. And the strategy of Allâh is the best.” [56]

A poet says:

لا تجزعنَّ فبعد العسر تيسير - وكل شيء له وقت وتقدير
وللمقدر في أحوالنا نظر - وفوق تدبيرنا الله تدبير

“Do not be perturbed, for after difficulty there is ease. Everything has an appointed time and a destiny. For whatever that is destined in our lives, there is someone who is supervising it. And Allâh has a plan above our plans.”

Allâh ﷻ then permitted His Prophet ﷺ to emigrate. Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ says that it is in this regard that Allâh ﷻ says: “Say: ‘O my Sustainer! Make me enter in a true manner, make me leave in a true manner, and bestow upon

me, from You, a helpful authority.”[57] Jibra’îl ﷺ ordered the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to ask Abû Bakr ﷺ to accompany him on this journey.

Al-Hâkim narrates on the authority of ‘Alî ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said to Jibra’îl: “Who is going to emigrate with me?” He replied: “Abû Bakr as-Siddîq.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ informed ‘Alî ﷺ of his departure and ordered him to remain behind so that he could return all the goods and valuables that had been entrusted to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ by the people.

At-Tabarânî narrates a Hadîth of Asmâ’ *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*: “The Prophet ﷺ used to come to us in Makkah twice every day – morning and evening. When it was that day [of emigration] he came to us in the afternoon. So I said: ‘O father! Here is the Messenger of Allâh with his head covered, coming at a time that he never used to come to us.’ Abû Bakr ﷺ said: ‘May my parents be sacrificed for him. Some important matter has certainly brought him at this hour.’ ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* says: ‘The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came, sought permission to enter, Abû Bakr gave him permission and so he entered. Abû Bakr moved from his bed and the Messenger of Allâh sat on it. He then said to Abû Bakr: ‘Ask those who are here to go out.’ Abû Bakr said: ‘These are your family members, i.e. ‘Â’ishah and Asmâ’.’ In another narration, Abû Bakr said: ‘There is nothing to fear, they are merely my two daughters.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘I have been given permission to depart.’ Abû Bakr ﷺ asked: ‘May my parents be sacrificed for you, can I accompany you, O Messenger of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* says: ‘I saw Abû Bakr crying and I never thought anyone could cry out of happiness.’ Abû Bakr said: ‘May my parents be sacrificed for you O Messenger of Allâh, take one of these two riding camels of mine.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: ‘No. I will pay for it.’ In another narration, he said: ‘I will take it at its price, if you will.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ paid for it so that his emigration to Allâh ﷻ may be with his own self and his own wealth, out of his sole desire, and in order to perfect the merit of emigrating to Allâh ﷻ. ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* says: ‘We prepared the two camels as quickly as

we could. We prepared some food for them and placed it in a bag.’ Al-Wâqidî adds: ‘The bag contained a sheep that was cooked.’ ‘Ā’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* says: ‘Asmâ’ then cut a portion of her belt and used it to tie the mouth of the bag. It was because of this that she was given the title of *Dhât an-Nitâqayn* (the woman who has two belts). The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and Abû Bakr ؓ departed and then concealed themselves in the cave of Thaur for three days. This is the name of a mountain in Makkah. Thaur ibn ‘Abd Manât had settled in this mountain and it was therefore named after him.

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and Abû Bakr ؓ came out at night from a small door at the back of Abû Bakr’s ؓ house and then proceeded to the cave. It is related that Abû Jahl met them but Allâh ﷻ made him blind to them so that they could continue on their journey. Asmâ’ bint Abî Bakr *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “Abû Bakr ؓ left with 5000 dirhams. When the Quraysh found that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was missing, they searched for him high and low in Makkah. They sent trackers in every direction in order to search for his tracks. The tracker who went in the direction of Mt. Thaur found his tracks and he continued following these tracks till the trail stopped. When he reached Mt. Thaur, and his departure weighed heavily on the Quraysh and they became perturbed by it, they offered a ransom of 100 camels for whoever returns him to them.

It is related that when he and Abû Bakr ؓ entered the cave, Allâh ﷻ caused a tree to grow at the entrance of the cave. This tree thereby concealed the cave from the eyes of the unbelievers. Allâh ﷻ ordered a spider to spin a web at the mouth of the cave. He sent two wild doves who made a nest at the entrance. These are the things which turned the polytheists away from this cave. It is stated that the doves that are found in the *Haram* (the precinct of the Ka‘bah) are from the progeny of these two doves.

The Quraysh youths from each sub-tribe then went forth with their sticks, canes and swords. One of them reached the cave, looked at it and saw the two wild doves at its entrance. He then returned to his companions and they asked him: “What have you found?” He replied: “I saw two wild doves and

I gauged that there is no one inside.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard what he said and knew immediately that Allâh ﷻ protected him from them. Another said: “Go into the cave.” Umayyah ibn Khalaf said: “What is the need for you to go into the cave? It has a spider’s web that is even older than Muhammad [ﷺ]. Had he entered the cave, the eggs would have been broken and the spider’s web would have been disturbed.” All this was even more effective than combating the unbelievers with armies. Ponder over how the tree concealed the hunted and caused the hunter to get lost. Then came the spider which sealed off the entrance by spinning its web so that the tracks became lost to the tracker. This act of the spider earned great honour for it. Ibn an-Naqîb says in a poem:

ودود القز إن نسجت حريرا - يجمل لبسه في كل شيء
فإن العنكبوت أجل منها - بما نسجت على رأس النبي

“When the silkworm spins silk, wearing this silk is beautiful in everything. But the spider is greater than the silkworm because of the web it spun at the head of the Prophet ﷺ.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate on the authority of Anas ؓ who said that Abû Bakr ؓ narrated to him: “When we were in the cave, I said to the Prophet ﷺ: ‘If any of them [unbelievers] looks down at his feet, he will see us.’ So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘What do you think? With every two people, Allâh is the third.’ One of the biographers relates that when Abû Bakr ؓ said this to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, he replied: ‘If they came to us from here, we will escape from here.’ When Abû Bakr ؓ looked at the other end of the cave, he saw that it was open, the ocean was right next to it, and a ship was anchored at its shore. Al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahmatullâhi 'alayh* says that when Abû Bakr ؓ and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ were walking that night towards the cave, Abû Bakr ؓ would walk for some time in front of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. After that, he would walk for some time behind the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. So the latter asked him the reason for this. Abû

Bakr ﷺ replied: “When I think of the fact that they are in search of you, I walk behind you [because they will come from the back, and I will be there before they come to you]. When I think of the fact that they are lying in wait for you, I walk in front of you [because they will approach from the front, and I will be there before they come to you].” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: “If anything were to happen, I would like you to come to my defence [because I have full trust in you].” Abû Bakr ﷺ replied: “Indeed, [I will do so]. I take an oath by that Being who sent you with the truth.” When the two reached the cave, he said: “You wait here, O Messenger of Allâh, so that I may clean the cave and make it safe for you.” Abû Bakr went in and made it safe for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He began searching for holes in the cave. Each time he discovered a hole, he cut a piece of cloth from his garment and sealed the hole. He continued doing so until he used up his entire garment. One hole was left, so he placed his heel on it so that nothing harmful would come out and harm the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then entered, placed his head in the lap of Abû Bakr ﷺ and fell asleep. Abû Bakr ﷺ was stung in his foot which had been sealing the hole but he did not move for fear that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ might wake up. Tears fell from his face onto the face of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. So he said: “What has happened to you, O Abû Bakr?” He replied: “May my parents be sacrificed for you, I have been stung.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ wiped the spot of that sting with his saliva and Abû Bakr ﷺ no longer felt any pain. How beautiful the words of Hassân ibn Thâbit ﷺ are:

وثاني اثنين في الغار المنيف وقد - طاف العدو به إذ صاعد الجبال

وكان حب رسول الله قد علمو - من الخلائق لم يعدل به بدلا

“One of the two [Abû Bakr ﷺ] was in the high cave, when the enemy walked around it when he climbed the mountain. His love for the Messenger of Allâh was well known among everyone. He never considered anything equal to this love.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ left Makkah on a Thursday and left the cave on Monday. He remained in the cave for three days. He left on the 1st of Rabî‘ al-Awwal and entered Madinah on Friday, the 12th of Rabî‘ al-Awwal.

It is related that a very pious man by the name of Zakarîyyâ fell extremely ill and the time of his death drew near. His friend came to him while he was in the throes of death. He made him read the *kalimah* (the first tenet of Islam) but he turned his face away and did not say anything. The friend did this a second time, but again he turned his face away. The friend did this a third time and the man said: “I am not going to say it.” Consequently, his friend fell unconscious. After some time, the pious man felt a bit of relief, he opened his eyes and asked: “Did you tell me anything?” Those who were present replied: “Yes. We made you read the *kalimah* three times but you turned away the first two times, and on the last time you said: ‘I am not going to say it.’” The pious man said: “Satan, may Allâh’s curse be on him, came to me with a bowl of water and stood on my right hand side. While he was shaking the bowl, he asked me: ‘Do you need some water?’ I replied: ‘Indeed.’ He said: ‘You must first say that ‘Îsâ is the son of Allâh.’ I therefore turned away from him. He then came to me from the direction of my feet and asked me the same question. Again I turned away from him. The third time he asked me the same thing, so I said: ‘I am not going to say it.’ He therefore threw the bowl to the ground and turned away fleeing from here. I thus refused Satan and not you all. I now bear testimony that there is none worthy of worship but Allâh, and I bear testimony that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.”

It is related on the authority of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* that a person asked Allâh ﷻ to show him the place where Satan is in the heart of man. In his dream, the person saw the body of a man that was like crystal clear glass – his internal organs could be seen from the outside. He saw Satan in the form of a frog sitting on his left shoulder, close to his ear. Satan had a long, thin trunk which he inserted from the man’s left shoulder to his heart, whispering to him. When the person engaged in the remembrance of Allâh, Satan withdrew from there.

O Allâh! Do not empower any rebellious Satan over us, nor any human who is jealous of us. Help us to engage in Your remembrance and in expressing

gratitude to You through the honour of the seal of Your Prophets and Messengers, Muhammad ﷺ .

ON TRUSTWORTHINESS AND REPENTANCE

It is narrated on the authority of Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir who said: I heard my father saying: while Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* was circuiting the Ka‘bah, he saw a person sending salutations to the Prophet ﷺ at every step that he took. I said to him: “O person! You are not saying the *tasbîh* (glorification of Allâh) nor the *tahlîl* (to say that there is none worthy of worship but Allâh), yet you are fully engrossed in sending salutations to the Prophet ﷺ. Do you have any reason for this?” He asked: “May Allâh protect you, who are you?” I replied: “I am Sufyân ath-Thaurî.” He said: “Were it not for the fact that you are among the most pious personalities of your time, I would not inform you about myself nor would I share my secret with you.” He then said to me: “My father and I left in order to perform the pilgrimage to the House of Allâh ﷻ. On our journey, my father fell ill. I tended to him, but he eventually passed away. When he passed away, his face turned dark in colour. So I said to my self: ‘To Allâh we belong and to Him is our return.’ I then covered his face. Sleep overtook me and I slept with much grief. In my sleep, I saw a man – I never saw a person more handsome than him, wearing cleaner clothes than him, and having a better fragrance than him. He walked forward until he came to my father. He uncovered his face, passed his hand over his face and it immediately became illuminated. He then turned around to go back. So I held on to his garment and asked: ‘O servant of Allâh! Who are you that Allâh ﷻ has been so kind to my father through you, in this strange land?’ He replied: ‘Don’t you know me? I am Muhammad ibn ‘Abdillâh [ﷺ], the person to whom the Qur’ân was revealed. Your father used to commit excesses against himself, but he used to send abundant salutations to me. So when this calamity [of his face turning dark due to sins] afflicted him, he sought help from me. I come to the assistance of those who send abundant salutations to me.’ I then got up from my sleep and saw that my father’s face had become illuminated.”

‘Amr ibn Dînâr narrates on the authority of Abû Ja‘far that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The person who forgets to send salutations to me has in fact lost the path to Paradise.”

You should know that the word *amânah* (trustworthiness) is derived from the word *amn*. When a person possesses this quality of *amânah* he is safe from refusing to fulfil the truth. The opposite of this is *khiyânah* (treachery, cheating). This word is derived from the word *khawan* which means a shortfall or a shortcoming. If you cheat someone in anything, you have actually caused a shortfall or shortcoming to him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Deception, betrayal and treachery will all be in the Hell-fire.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who deals with people without wronging them, and speaks to them without lying to them, then he is from among those whose sense of honour is complete, whose justice has become obvious, and whose brothers is incumbent.”

A Bedouin praised a people by saying: “They are extremely fond of trustworthiness. They therefore do not act treacherously when they are given a responsibility. They do not encroach on the sanctity of a Muslim, therefore no responsibility remains unfulfilled by them. They are therefore the best of peoples.” I [Imâm Ghazzâlî *rahimahullâh*] say: “These people whom the Bedouin praised have long expired. Therefore, all that we see today are wolves in clothing.” A poet says:



بمن يثق الإنسان فيما ينوبه - ومن أين للحر الكريم صحاب
وقد صار هذا الناس إلا أقلهم - ذئابا على أجسادهم ثياب











“On whom can a person rely when he has any problem? From where can an honourable, free person find a [true] friend when people, except a few, have become wolves on whose bodies is clothing?”

Another poet says:

ذهب الذين يقال عند فراقهم - ليت البلاد وما بها تصدع

“Those people have long gone, who, at the time of their death, it is said: ‘If only the lands and all that is in them were reduced to bits.’”

Hudhayfah  says that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Trustworthiness will be raised [removed from society]. People will engage in transactions with each other and hardly anyone from among them will fulfil the trusts. [Trustworthiness will become so rare] that people will say: ‘In such and such family there is a trustworthy person.’”

You should know that repentance is incumbent based on certain verses of the Qur’ân and certain Ahâdîth. Allâh  says: “Repent to Allâh altogether, O believers, perhaps you will be successful.” [\[58\]](#) This is an order that is all-encompassing. Allâh  says: “O believers! Turn to Allâh in repentance with a sincere repentance.” [\[59\]](#) The word “sincere” means totally devoted to Allâh , free from all taints. The following verse portrays the merit of repentance. Allâh  says: “Surely Allâh loves those who repent and He loves those who keep themselves pure.” [\[60\]](#) The Messenger of Allâh  said: “A repentant person is the beloved of Allâh , and the person who repents from a sin is like one who has no sin whatsoever.” The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Allâh  is more pleased with the repentance of a believing person than a person who [was travelling and] stopped over at a deserted and destructive spot together with his camel on which was all his food and drink. He places his head in order to rest and falls asleep. When he gets up, he sees that his camel [together with all his possessions] has disappeared. He goes in search of it till the intense heat, thirst and whatever else Allâh  imposes upon him [forces him to return to the original spot]. He says to himself: ‘I will return to my original spot [where I lost my camel] and I will sleep away till I die.’ And so, he places his head on his forearm in order to die. He then wakes up and sees his camel right in front of him, with all his food and drink on it. So Allâh  is far more happier with the repentance of a believing person than this traveller with finding his camel.”

It is narrated on the authority of al-Hasan that when Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of Âdam ﷺ, the angels congratulated him, Jibra'îl ﷺ and Mîkâ'îl ﷺ came down to him and said: "O Âdam! May you rejoice with Allâh's acceptance of your repentance." Âdam ﷺ said: "O Jibra'îl! If after this repentance there is any question, then what is my position?" Allâh ﷻ revealed to him saying: "O Âdam! You have given your progeny the legacy of tiredness and fatigue while I have given them the legacy of repentance. So whoever from among them calls to Me, I will respond to his call just as I responded to your call. Whoever asks me for forgiveness, I will not be niggardly towards him for I am extremely close, and I accept repentance. O Âdam! I raise the repentant ones from their graves while they are rejoicing and laughing. And their supplications are accepted."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Allâh ﷻ extends His hand with repentance to the person who commits a sin at night till the morning, and for him who commits sin during the day till the night. [Allâh ﷻ will continue doing so] till the sun rises from the west [shortly before the resurrection]." Extension of the hand is an allusion to seeking repentance. The person who seeks repentance is beyond he who is still approaching to seek repentance. This is because at times the one who is approaching is not really seeking. As for he who is seeking repentance, he has already passed the stage of approaching [to seek repentance].

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "If you were to commit sins to the extent that they reach the skies and then you express remorse [over committing them], Allâh ﷻ will accept your repentance."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "A person commits a sin and goes to Paradise on account of it." He was asked: "How is that possible, O Messenger of Allâh?" He replied: "His attention is directed towards repenting and fleeing from that sin until he enters Paradise."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The expiation for sinning is to be remorseful."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who repents from a sin is like one who has committed no sin.”

It is related that an Abyssinian asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! I used to commit acts of immorality. Is there repentance for me?” He replied: “Yes.” This Abyssinian turned away and then returned and asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! When I used to commit these immoral acts, was Allâh watching me?” He replied: “Yes.” This Abyssinian screamed out with such force that he passed away in the process.

It is related that when Allâh ﷻ cursed Satan, he asked Him for respite. So Allâh ﷻ gave him respite till the day of resurrection. He said: “By Your honour, I will come out of the heart of mankind as long as there is life in him.” Allâh ﷻ said: “By My honour and My greatness, I will give mankind the veil of repentance as long as there is life in him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Good deeds wipe out evil deeds just as water washes off filth.”

Sa‘îd ibn al-Musayyib ؓ relates that Allâh ﷻ revealed the following verse with regard to a person who used to sin, then repent, sin again and repent again. The verse is: “He forgives those who turn to Him.” [\[61\]](#)

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘Give glad tidings to the sinners that when they repent, I accept their repentance. And warn the truthful that if I were to remove from them My justice, I would punish them.’”

‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ؓ said: “The person who thinks of a sin [which he committed], feels pain for committing it, and his heart trembles at it, then such a sin is wiped out from his book of deeds.”

It is related that a Prophet committed a mistake. Allâh ﷻ revealed to him saying: “By My honour, if you commit that mistake again I will punish you.” The Prophet said: “O my Sustainer! You are You, and I am I [a

human]. By Your honour, if You do not protect me, I will certainly commit that mistake again.” And so, Allâh ﷻ protected him.

It is related that a person asked Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ about a sin by which he was pained, if there was the possibility of repentance for him. Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ turned away from him. He then turned towards him and saw that his eyes were tearing. He said to him: “Paradise has eight gates – all of them are opened and closed except for the gate of repentance. This gate has an angel that is appointed over it. It is never closed. You should therefore continue in your [good] deeds and do not despair.”

It is related that there was a youngster in the Banî Isrâ’îl who worshipped Allâh ﷻ for 20 years. He then disobeyed Allâh ﷻ for 20 years. He then looked at himself in the mirror and saw grey hairs in his beard. He did not like what he saw. He said: “O myAllâh! I obeyed You for 20 years. I then disobeyed You for 20 years. If I return to You, will You accept me?” He heard a voice without seeing who it was: “When you loved Us, We loved you. When you left Us, We left you. When you disobeyed Us, We gave you respite. If you return to Us, We will accept you.”

It is related on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person turns in repentance to Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ accepts his repentance and He causes the angels who record his deeds to forget the sins which they had recorded, and He causes his body parts to forget the evil deeds which they committed, and He causes the place in the earth and the sky to also forget. Allâh ﷻ does all this so that he may come to Him on the day of resurrection without anyone or anything from the creation being able to testify against him.”

It is related on the authority of ‘Alî ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Four thousand years before the creation could be created, the following was inscribed around the throne of Allâh ﷻ: ‘I am extremely forgiving to the person who repents, believes, does good deeds, and remains on guidance.’”

You should know that to repent from both major and minor sins immediately is an incumbent duty. Persisting in committing minor sins causes them to be enumerated among major sins. Allâh ﷻ says:

“Those who, when they commit an open sin or commit an evil to themselves, they remember Allâh and seek forgiveness for their sins. And who is there that forgives sins except Allâh? And they do not persist in what they have done while they know.” [62]

A sincere repentance entails a person repenting externally and internally, expressing remorse, and having no intention of repeating that sin. The similitude of a person who repents outwardly only is like that of a dunghill over which a sheet of silk is spread. People look at it and admire it. But once the sheet is removed, [and they see what is beneath it], they turn away in disgust. In like manner, people look at those who portray outward obedience. When the veil is uncovered on the day of resurrection, the day when secrets are exposed, the angels will turn away in disgust from them. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ does not look at your outward appearances, rather He looks at your hearts.”

















Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “Many a repentant person will come on the day of resurrection thinking that he is a repentant person but he is not really a repentant person. This is because he did not fortify the doors of repentance with remorse, the determination not to repeat that sin, the determination to redress the wrongs that he did to people if possible, and to seek to absolve himself from them if possible, if not, to engage in abundant forgiveness for himself and for them so that they may be pleased with him.” Forgetting sins is one of the vilest of evils. It is therefore the duty of an intelligent person to take account of himself and not to forget his sins. A poet says:

يا أيها المذنب المحصي جرائمه — لا تنس ذنبك واذكر منه ما سلفا

وتب إلى الله قبل الموت وانزعجرا — يا عاصيا واعترف إن كنت معترفا

“O sinner who can count his sins. Do not forget your sins and remember all your past sins. Repent to Allâh before death [overtakes you]. Reprimand

yourself, O disobedient one. And confess [your sins] if you really have to confess them.”

The jurist, Abû al-Layth *rahimahullâh*, narrates: ‘Umar  went crying to the Messenger of Allâh . The Messenger of Allâh  asked him: “Why are you crying, O ‘Umar?” He replied: “O Messenger of Allâh! There is a youth by the door who has burnt my heart by his crying.” The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Bring him in, O ‘Umar!” The youth came inside while he was still crying. The Messenger of Allâh  asked him: “Why are you crying, O youth?” He replied: “O Messenger of Allâh! The large number of sins is causing me to cry. And I fear the wrath of the Mighty [Allâh ] on me.” The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Have you ascribed any partner to Allâh?” He replied: “No.” He asked: “Did you kill anyone with any just cause?” He replied: “No.” The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Allâh  shall certainly forgive your sins even if they are equal to the seven heavens, the seven [layers] of earth and the mountains.” The youth said: “My sins are greater than that.” The Messenger of Allâh  asked: “Are your sins greater or the *kursî* (chair of Allâh)?” He replied: “My sins.” The Messenger of Allâh  asked: “Are your sins greater or the ‘*arsh* (throne of Allâh)?” He replied: “My sins.” The Messenger of Allâh  asked: “Are your sins greater or your Allâh, i.e. His pardon?” He replied: “Allâh  is indeed greater and mightier.” The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Well, none can forgive great sins except the Lord who is great, in other words, who is very great in His pardon.” The Messenger of Allâh  then asked him: “Tell me about your sin.” He replied: “I am shy of you, O Messenger of Allâh!” He said: “Even then, tell me.” The youth said: “O Messenger of Allâh! I used to excavate graves for the last seven years. When one young girl from the Ansâr passed away, I excavated her grave, took her shroud and continued for a short distance. Satan then overpowered me and so I returned to her and engaged in sexual intercourse with her. I then continued for a short distance when the very same girl stood up and said: ‘Woe to you, O youth! Are you not ashamed of Allâh who takes the wrong doer to task on behalf of the one who has been wronged? You have left me here naked among the dead, and you left me in a state of impurity before Allâh ?’” [On hearing this], the

Messenger of Allâh ﷺ jumped up and pushed him saying: “O sinner! You are certainly deserving of the Hell-fire. Get away from me.” The youth left in repentance before Allâh ﷻ for 40 days. On the completion of 40 days, he raised his head towards the heavens and said: “O the Allâh of Muhammad, Âdam and Ibrâhîm! If You have forgiven me, then inform Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions [that You have forgiven me]. If not, send down a fire from the skies and burn me with it and save me from the punishment of the hereafter.” Jibra’îl ﷺ came down to the Prophet ﷺ and said: “O Muhammad! Your Sustainer conveys greetings to you and asks you: ‘Have you created the creation?’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: “Rather it is He who created me and them, and provided for me and for them.” Jibra’îl ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘I have accepted the repentance of the youth.’” The Prophet ﷺ then called the youth and gave him the glad tidings that Allâh ﷻ accepted his repentance.

It is related that there was a person during the era of Mûsâ ﷺ who could not remain steadfast on his repentance. Each time he repented, he broke it. He remained in this way for 20 years. Allâh ﷻ revealed to Mûsâ ﷺ saying: “Say to such and such servant of Mine that I am angry with him.” Mûsâ ﷺ conveyed this message to the person. The latter became grieved and went away into the desert saying: “O my Allâh! Is Your mercy finished or has my disobedience harmed You? Have the treasures of Your pardon become empty or are You acting stingily towards Your servants? Which sin can be greater than Your pardon whereas kindness is from among Your ancient attributes while wickedness is from among my recent attributes? Can my attribute overpower Your attribute? If You veil Your mercy from Your servants, in whom can they hope from? If You repulse them, to whom can they go to? O my Allâh! If Your mercy is finished and there is no alternative but to punish me, hold back from all Your servants for I have ransomed myself for them.” Allâh ﷻ said to Mûsâ ﷺ: “Go to him and tell him this: ‘If your sins were to fill the entire earth, I would forgive you your sins for you have recognized Me as a being who possesses absolute power, pardon and mercy.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no sound more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than the sound of a sinful person seeking repentance, saying: ‘O my Sustainer.’ Allâh replies: ‘Here I am O my servant! Ask whatever you want. In My sight, you are like some of My angels. I am to your right, to your left, above you, and very close to the depths of your heart.’ O My angels! Bear witness that I have forgiven him.”

Dhû an-Nûn Misrî *rahimahullâh* said: Allâh ﷻ has servants who planted trees of sins like weak hearts. They then irrigated these hearts with the water of repentance. They then bore the fruits of remorse and grief. They then became insane without any insanity, and foolish with neither foolishness nor dumbness. In fact, they are the eloquent and articulate persons who have truly recognized Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. They then drank with the cup of purity and thereby inherited patience despite lengthy periods of trials and tribulations. Their hearts then became infatuated with sovereignty [of Allâh ﷻ] and their thoughts began delving in the secrets of the might [of Allâh ﷻ]. They then sought shade beneath the tents of remorse and they read the record of misdeeds. This caused their souls to tremble till they reached the high mantles of asceticism by accepting piety. In so doing, even the bitterness of abstaining from the world seemed sweet to them and even the coarseness of their resting place seemed soft and comfortable to them. They eventually attained the rope of salvation and the knot of peace and security. Their souls then proceeded freely in the lofty positions till they settled down in the gardens of bliss. They dived in the sea of life and filled up the trenches of fear. They crossed the bridges of desires till they disembarked in the courtyard of knowledge. They drank from the fountain of wisdom, they boarded the ship of intelligence, they set sail with the winds of salvation in the sea of peace till they reached the gardens of comfort and the source of honour and dignity [Allâh ﷻ].

ON THE VIRTUE OF SHOWING MERCY

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “None but the person who is merciful shall enter Paradise.” The Companions y said: “O Messenger of Allâh! All of us are merciful.” He replied: “A merciful person is not he who shows mercy to himself alone. Rather, a merciful person is he who shows mercy to himself and to others as well.” The meaning of showing “mercy to himself” is that he shows mercy to himself from the punishment of Allâh ﷻ by abstaining from sins, repenting when committing them, doing good deeds, and being sincere in doing good deeds. The meaning of showing mercy to others is that the person should not strive to harm a fellow Muslim.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A true Muslim is he from whose hands and tongue people are safe.” A person should also show mercy to animals. He should not impose upon them tasks that are beyond their capability.

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “While a person was travelling on a road, severe thirst overtook him. He found a well in which he descended and drank thereof. He then came out and saw a dog panting out of thirst. He thought to himself: ‘This dog is experiencing the same thirst that I had experienced.’ He therefore filled his leather sock with water, held it by his mouth and gave the water to the dog. Allâh ﷻ was grateful for this act of his and therefore forgave him.” The Companions asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Are we also rewarded for showing kindness towards animals?!” He replied: “Reward can be obtained from every living creature.”

Anas ibn Mâlik ؓ narrates: “While ‘Umar ؓ was patrolling at night, he passed by a group of travellers who had stopped over. He feared that someone might try to steal from them. He met ‘Abd ar-Rahmân ibn ‘Auf ؓ and so the latter asked him: “What has brought you out at this hour, O Leader of the Believers?” He replied: “I passed by a group of travellers who have stopped over. I thought to myself that if they spent the night here, they would fall asleep. I fear that someone might try to steal from them. Let’s go

and keep guard for them.” They proceeded and sat close to the group of travellers, guarding them until when dawn broke, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه announced: O group of travellers! Prepare for salâh. When he saw them moving about and making preparation, he turned and left.” It is our duty to emulate the Companions y for Allâh ﷻ praises them by saying that they show mercy to each other. They used to show mercy to the Muslims and to the entire creation. They even showed mercy to the unbelievers who were under their protection (the *dhimmîs*).

It is related that ‘Umar رضي الله عنه saw a *dhimmî* going around begging. This person was a very old man, so ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said to him: “We have not been just to you. We took taxes from you as long as you were young. Now that you have gone old, we have abandoned you.” ‘Umar رضي الله عنه then ordered that the person’s daily food be provided from the Islamic treasury (*bayt al-mâl*).

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The generous persons of my *ummah* will not enter Paradise merely due to excessive salâh and fasting. Rather, they will enter Paradise because of the purity of their chests, their generosity and their mercy towards all the Muslims.”


The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Those who show mercy are shown mercy by the Merciful [Allâh]. Show mercy to those who are on earth, the being [Allâh] who is in the heavens will show mercy to you.”


The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who does not show mercy will not have mercy shown to him. The person who does not forgive will not be forgiven.”




Mâlik ibn Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are four rights which Muslims have over you: you help the one who does good, you seek forgiveness for the one who commits a crime, you visit the one who is ill, you love the one who is repentant.”


It is related that Mûsâ عليه السلام asked: “O my Sustainer! On what basis did You make me Your chosen one?” Allâh ﷻ replied: “On account of the mercy



you show to My creation.”



It is related that Abû Dardâ'  used to follow some children and purchase from them the little birds which they had captured. He would then release these birds and say: “Go and live.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “The similitude of Muslims in their mutual mercy towards each other, their mutual love for each other and their mutual relationships with each other is like that of a body. If one part of the body complains, the entire body responds with fever and sleeplessness.”

An ardent worshipper from the Banî Isrâ'îl passed by a sand-hill. At that time, the Banî Isrâ'îl was experiencing intense hunger. He therefore wished to himself that had this sand-hill been flour, it would have satiated the hunger of the Banî Isrâ'îl. Allâh  revealed to a Prophet of the Banî Isrâ'îl saying: “Go and say to such and such person that Allâh  has made incumbent upon you a certain reward equivalent to that sand-hill had it turned into flour and your satiating the hunger of the people.” It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “The intention of a believer is better than his deeds.”

It is related that one day 'Îsâ  came out and met Satan who had some honey in one hand and ash in the other. So he asked him: “What are you doing with this honey and ash, O enemy of Allâh?” He replied: “This honey I place on the mouths of those engaged in back-biting so that they may continue in this act. As for the ash, I smear it on the faces of orphans so that people abhor them.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “When an orphan is struck, the throne of the Merciful [Allâh] trembles on account of the orphan's crying. Allâh  then says: ‘O My angels! Who has caused this child whose father has been buried in the ground to cry?’”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “When a person gives refuge to an orphan by giving him food and drink, Allâh  makes Paradise incumbent

on such a person.”

It is related in *Raudah al-'Ulamâ'* that when Ibrâhîm عليه السلام intended to eat, he would walk a mile or two in search of someone who would eat with him. One day, 'Alî عليه السلام began crying. Someone asked him the reason, so he replied: “No guest has come to me for the past seven days. I therefore fear that Allâh عز وجل has disgraced me.”

The Messenger of Allâh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “The person who feeds a hungry person solely for the pleasure of Allâh عز وجل, Paradise becomes incumbent on him. The person who refuses food to a hungry person, Allâh عز وجل refuses him His grace on the day of resurrection and punishes him in the Hell-fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “A generous person is close to Allâh, close to Paradise, close to people, far from the Hell-fire. A miserly person is far from Allâh, far from Paradise, far from people, close to the Hell-fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “An ignorant but generous person is more beloved to Allâh عز وجل than an ardent worshipper who is miserly.”

The Messenger of Allâh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “When the day of resurrection takes place, four persons will enter Paradise without any reckoning: (1) an *'âlim* who practises on his knowledge, (2) a person who performs the pilgrimage and does not commit any obscenity or act of disobedience till he dies, (3) a martyr who fights on the battlefield in order to raise the authority of Islam, (4) a generous person who earned wealth from lawful sources and spent it in the cause of Allâh عز وجل without any show. These four will argue with each other as to which of them should go first into Paradise.”

Ibn 'Abbâs رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “Allâh عز وجل has special servants whom He showers with bounties for the benefit of people. The person who acts miserly in distributing these bounties to the people, Allâh عز وجل takes away those bounties from him and hands them over to someone else.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Generosity is one of the trees of Paradise with its branches reaching down to earth. The one who holds on to one of its branches, that branch guides him towards Paradise.”

Jâbir رضي الله عنه narrates: Someone asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Which deeds are the best?” He replied: “Patience and generosity.”

Al-Miqdâm ibn Shurayh narrates from his father who narrates from his grandfather who said: “I asked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Show me an act that would admit me into Paradise.’ He replied: ‘From among the things that make the forgiveness [of Allâh ﷻ] incumbent is feeding food [to people], spreading the greeting of peace, and speaking good words.’”

ON HUMILITY IN SALÂH

It is related in a Tradition that Jibra'îl عليه السلام came one day to the Prophet ﷺ and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! I saw an angel in the heavens, sitting on a bed with 70 000 angels around him in rows, serving him. Every time this angel takes a breath, Allâh ﷻ creates an angel from that breath of his. Now I saw that angel on a bare mountain, his wings broken and crying. When he saw me, he asked: ‘Will you intercede on my behalf?’ I asked: “What is your crime?” He replied: ‘I was sitting on this bed of mine on the night of *mi'râj* when Muhammad ﷺ passed by me, and I did not stand out of respect for him. So Allâh ﷻ punished me in this way and placed me in this place as you can see.’ I submitted before Allâh ﷻ and interceded on his behalf. Allâh ﷻ said: ‘O Jibra'îl! He will only be forgiven when he sends salutations to Muhammad.’ So that angel sent salutations to you. Allâh ﷻ pardoned him and caused his wings to grow again.”

You should know that it is related that the first thing that will be looked into from the deeds of a person on the day of resurrection is his salâh. If it is found to be complete, it and all his other deeds will be accepted from him. If it is found to be deficient, it and all his other deeds will be rejected.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The similitude of the obligatory salâh is like that of a scale. He who fills it, it will show the full weight.”

Yazîd ar-Ruqâshî said: “The salâh of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was complete, as though it was weighed exactly.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Two people from my *ummah* will stand up for salâh, their bowing and prostrating will be the same, yet the difference in their respective salâhs will be as vast as the distance between the heavens and the earth.” Referring to the difference in humility.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection, Allâh ﷻ will not look at a person who does not straighten his back between the bowing and prostrating postures.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who offers his salâh at its appointed time, makes a complete ablution for it, fulfils its bowing and prostrating postures completely, and fulfils it with humility, it will be raised white and luminous. It will say: ‘May Allâh protect you as you protected me.’ The person who offers his salâh at its inappropriate time, does not make a complete ablution for it, does not fulfil its bowing and prostrating postures completely, and does not fulfil it with humility, it is raised black and dark. It will say: ‘May Allâh destroy you as you destroyed me.’ Till it goes wherever Allâh wills, it is then folded like a worn out garment and the person’s face is struck with it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The worst thief is he who steals from his salâh.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ said: “Salâh is a scale. The one who fills it, it will show the full weight. The one who gives less of it, he knows what Allâh says in this regard: ‘Destruction to those who give short measure.’” [\[63\]](#)

Some ‘ulamâ’ say: “The similitude of a person offering salâh is like that of a businessman who does not make any profit until his capital is pure. Similar with a person offering salâh. His optional salâh is not accepted until he fulfils his obligatory salâh.”

When the time of salâh used to come, Abû Bakr ؓ would say: “Stand before the fire of your Sustainer which you kindled, and extinguish it [with salâh].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Salâh entails calmness and humility.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person whose salâh does not stop him from obscenity and evil only gets further away from Allâh ﷻ. And the

salâh of the one who is inattentive [in his salâh] will not stop him from obscenity and evil.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Many a person standing in salâh gains nothing from it except tiredness and fatigue.” He is referring to the person who is inattentive in his salâh.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person does not gain anything from his salâh except that in which he was fully aware.”

People who have truly recognized Allâh ﷻ said: “Salâh entails four things: (1) commencing with full knowledge and cognisance, (2) standing with humility, (3) fulfilling [the different postures] with respect [for Allâh ﷻ], (4) completing it with fear.”

A shaykh said: “The person whose salâh is not confined to the reality of salâh, his salâh becomes corrupt.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is a river in Paradise called *al-Afyah*. In it are the maidens of Paradise whom Allâh ﷻ created from saffron. They play with pearls and sapphires. They glorify Allâh ﷻ in 70 000 different languages. Their voices are more beautiful than the voice of Dâ’ûd عليه السلام. They say: ‘We are for him who offered his salâh with humility and presence of heart.’ Allâh ﷻ says: ‘I will cause such a person to live in My house and I will make him from among My visitors.’”

It is related that Allâh ﷻ revealed to Mûsâ عليه السلام saying: “O Mûsâ! When you remember Me, do so in a way that your body parts tremble. And at the time of remembering Me, you should be humble and calm. When you remember Me, let your tongue be behind your heart [subservient to your heart]. When you stand before Me, stand like a submissive slave. Converse with Me with a fearful heart and a honest tongue.”

It is related that Allâh ﷻ revealed to him saying: “Say to the disobedient ones from your *ummah* not to remember Me because I have taken an oath

upon Myself that the person who remembers Me, I shall remember him. So if they [disobedient ones] remember Me, I shall remember them with curses.” This is with regard to a disobedient person who is not inattentive in his remembrance. What about that person who is both inattentive and also disobedient?!

Some Companions y said: “People will be raised on the day of resurrection in a manner similar to their appearance in salâh – as regards tranquillity, calmness, experiencing the bounty and enjoyment of salâh.”

The Prophet ﷺ saw a person playing with his beard while offering salâh. So he said: “If this person’s heart had submitted [before Allâh in salâh] the rest of his body parts would also have submitted [by remaining still].”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The person whose heart is not submissive, his salâh is rejected.” You should know that in several verses Allâh ﷻ praises those who are humble and submissive in salâh: “Who are humble in their salâh.” [64] “who are mindful of their salâh.” [65] “who remain constant in their salâh.” [66]

It is said that those who offer salâh are many, but those who are humble in their salâh are few. Those who perform the pilgrimage are many, but those who are devoted are few. Birds are many, but nightingales are few. ‘*Ulamâ*’ are many, but those who practise on their knowledge are few.

Salâh is the place of submissiveness, the source of humility and submission. And this is the sign of acceptance. It should be known that there is a prerequisite for the validity of salâh and a prerequisite for the acceptance of salâh. The prerequisite for the validity of salâh is fulfilling its obligatory acts. The prerequisite for the acceptance of salâh is humility. Allâh ﷻ says: “Successful indeed are the believers. Who are humble in their salâh.” [67]

The other prerequisite for the acceptance of salâh is piety (*taqwâ*). Allâh ﷻ says: “Allâh only accepts from the pious ones.” [68]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who offers two rak‘ats of salâh with his heart directed towards Allâh ﷻ comes out from his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him.”

You should know that it is the preoccupying thoughts that enter the heart that distract you in salâh. These thoughts therefore have to be repulsed. These are at times repulsed by offering salâh in a dark place, or in a place that is devoid of other distractions such as sounds, carpets that have certain designs on them, and abstaining from wearing beautiful clothing which could distract a person if he were to look at them in salâh. It is related that the Prophet ﷺ wore a garment having designs on it, given to him by Abû Jahm. He offered salâh with it and after his salâh he removed it saying: “Go and give it back to Abû Jahm for it just now distracted me from my salâh.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered his sandal straps to be replaced with new ones. He then looked at these new straps while he was in his salâh. He ordered that these new straps be removed and the old ones brought back.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was wearing a gold ring before gold could be made unlawful for men. While he was sitting on the pulpit he threw it out and said: “This ring has distracted me. One moment I am looking at it and the next moment I am looking at you.”

Another person narrates that he was offering salâh in his orchard with the date-palms fully laden with fruit. He looked at the fruit and admired them. He thus forgot how many rak‘ats of salâh he offered. He mentioned this to ‘Uthmân ؓ and said: “I am giving this orchard in charity. Use it for the cause of Allâh ﷻ.” ‘Uthmân ؓ then sold it for 50 000 dinars.

A pious person of the past said: “Four things are loathsome in salâh: turning around, wiping the face, levelling the ground [when there are pebbles, etc. on it], and offering salâh at a place where people will pass in front of you.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ turns His attention towards a person offering salâh as long as he does not turn around.”

When Abû Bakr ؓ was in his salâh, it was as though he was a stake [that was struck into the ground]. Some of them used to remain so still in their

bowing posture that birds used to sit on them as though they were inanimate objects [having no movement whatsoever]. One's nature demands that all this should be followed when standing before a person whom you respect in this world. How then can this not be required when standing before the king of kings [Allâh ﷻ]?

The following is written in the Taurâh: "O man! Do not be incapable of standing before Me, offering salâh and crying. For I am Allâh who is very close to your heart, and through the unseen I can see My light."

It is related that 'Umar رضي الله عنه said the following while on the pulpit: "A person's sideburns become grey in Islam without his perfecting a salâh for Allâh ﷻ." He was asked: "How is that?" He replied: "He does not perfect his humility in it, submissiveness in it, nor his attention to Allâh ﷻ in it."

Abû al-‘Âliyah was asked about this verse: "Who are neglectful of their salâh." [69] He replied: "He is the one who is neglectful in his salâh in the sense that he does not know how many rak‘ats he completed, two or three, three or four." Al-Hasan said: "He is the person who is neglectful of the time of salâh to the extent that it expires."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Allâh ﷻ says: 'My servant cannot save himself from Me except by fulfilling what I have made incumbent upon him.'"

ON BACKBITING AND SLANDER

You should know that Allâh ﷻ specifically denounced backbiting in His Book and compared the backbiter to the person who eats the flesh of a corpse. Allâh ﷻ says: “nor backbite one another. Would any one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead?” [\[70\]](#)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The following is unlawful to every Muslim concerning his fellow Muslim: his blood, his wealth and his honour.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Beware of backbiting for it is more serious than adultery.” A person may commit adultery and repent, and Allâh ﷻ may accept his repentance. As for the person who backbites, he will not be forgiven until the person whom he had backbitten does not forgive him. It is said that the person who backbites people is like a person who sets up a catapult and catapults right and left [without really aiming]. He thereby even strikes his own good deeds [and destroys them].

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever strikes his fellow brother with backbiting in order to discredit him, Allâh ﷻ will cause him to stand on the bridge of Hell-fire on the day of resurrection until he retracts from what he said.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Backbiting entails mentioning qualities about your fellow brother which he dislikes.” In other words, irrespective of whether you speak about some defect in his body, his lineage, his actions, his speech, his religious matters, his worldly matters, and even his clothing, his outer garment or his animal. In fact, some past scholars state that if you say: “Such and such person’s garment is long or short”, it will be considered to be backbiting. How much more serious it will then be if you mention something which he dislikes about his own self?!

It is related that a short woman came to the Prophet ﷺ for some work. When she left, ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “How short she is!” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: “You have backbitten her, O ‘Â’ishah!”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Beware of backbiting for it has three harms: (1) the person’s supplications are not answered, (2) his good deeds are not accepted, (3) evil deeds are piled upon him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said the following in denouncing slander: “The worst person on the day of resurrection shall be the two-faced person. He is the slanderer who comes to these people with a certain face, and goes to those people with another face. The person who is two-faced in this world shall have two tongues of fire on the day of resurrection.”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The slanderer will not enter Paradise.” If it is asked what is the wisdom behind Allâh ﷻ creating every creation with either the power of speech or without the power of speech, while the fish has no tongue whatsoever, it will be said that it is because when Allâh ﷻ created Âdam ﷺ, He ordered the angels to prostrate before him. They all did so except for Satan. Allâh ﷻ therefore cursed him, expelled him from Paradise and distorted him. He fell to earth and went to the oceans. The first thing that he saw was the fish. He informed it of the creation of Âdam ﷺ and said to it: “Âdam will hunt and capture the animals of the sea and land.” The fish conveyed this news about Âdam ﷺ to the animals of the sea, so Allâh ﷻ snatched its tongue away.

It is related that ‘Amr ibn Dînâr said: A person from Madinah had a sister living on the outskirts of Madinah. She complained [of some illness] so he used to go to visit her. She then passed away. He shrouded her and carried her to the grave. When she was buried, he returned to her family. He then remembered that he had a bag which was with him which he dropped in the grave. He asked one of his friends to help him, and so the two of them went to the grave and dug it up. They then found the bag. The person then said to his friend: “Move aside so that I may see in what condition she is.” He then removed some of the covering that was on the actual place where she was

placed and saw that it was a blazing fire. He returned to his mother and asked her: "Tell me, how had my sister been living?" She replied: "Your sister used to go to the doors of the neighbours, place her ears against the doors so that she could hear what they were saying and then slander them." The man realized that this was the reason for her punishment in the grave. So whoever wishes to be safe from the punishment of the grave should abstain from slander and backbiting.

It is related that Abû al-Layth al-Bukhârî left for the pilgrimage. He placed two dirhams in his pocket and took an oath that if he were to backbite about anyone during his forward or return journey from Makkah, it will become incumbent upon him to give these two dirhams in charity for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ. So he went to Makkah and eventually returned to his house, with his two dirhams still in his pocket. Someone asked him about this, so he replied: "I would rather commit adultery 100 times than backbiting a single time."

Abû Hafs al-Kabîr said: "I would rather not fast in the month of Ramadân than backbiting about someone." He then said: "The person who backbites about a jurist (*faqîh*) will come on the day of resurrection with the following written on his face: 'This person has no hope of the mercy of Allâh.'"

Anas ibn Mâlik ﷺ said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "On the night of *mi'râj*, I passed by some people who were scratching their faces with their nails and eating corpses. So I asked: Who are these people, O Jibra'îl? He replied: 'These are the people who eat the flesh of people in the world.'"

Al-Hasan ﷺ said: "Backbiting is far swifter in causing harm to the Islam of a person than a germ that enters the body."

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ said: "One of you sees the filth in his fellow brother's eye but he does not see the calamity in his own eye."

It is related that Salmân ﷺ was on a journey with Abû Bakr ﷺ and 'Umar ﷺ and he used to prepare the meals for them. They stopped over at a place and Salmân was unable to provide them with any food. They sent him to the

Prophet ﷺ to see if he has any food. He did not find anything with him and therefore returned to them. Consequently, Abû Bakr ؓ and ‘Umar ؓ said: “Even if he [Salmân] went to a certain well for water, its water would run dry.” This verse was then revealed: “nor backbite one another. Would any one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? You will abhor it.” [71]

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever eats the flesh of his brother in this world [by backbiting], Allâh ﷻ will present before him his flesh on the day of resurrection and say to him: ‘Eat his flesh while he is dead for you ate it when he was alive.’ The person will then have to eat it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then recited this verse: “nor backbite one another. Would any one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead?”

It is related from Jâbir ibn ‘Abdillâh al-Ansârî ؓ that the smell of backbiting used to be clearly recognized in the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ because it [backbiting] was so rare. As for these times, backbiting has become so common and the noses are so filled with it that the smell of it cannot even be recognized. This is similar to a person who enters a house where tanners live. He cannot remain in that house because of the smell and stink [that is emitted when leather is tanned]. On the other hand, the inhabitants of that house [are living a normal life], eating and drinking therein, without that stinking smell getting to them. This is because their noses are filled [and used] to it. Similar is the case with backbiting in these times of ours.

Ka‘b ؓ said: “I read in a book that the person who passes away repentant from backbiting will be the last to enter Paradise. And the person who passes away persistent in backbiting will be the first to enter Hell-fire.”

Allâh ﷻ says: “There is great destruction for every such person who is a backbiter, slanderer.” [72] In other words, the worst punishment is meted out to the backbiter. A backbiter is he who speaks ill of you in your absence while the slanderer is he who speaks ill of you in your face. This verse was revealed with regard to al-Walîd ibn al-Mughîrah who used to speak ill of

the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and the Muslims in their faces. Although the reason for its revelation is specific, this warning can be all-inclusive and applicable to everyone.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Beware of backbiting because it is worse than adultery.” The Companions asked: “How can backbiting be worse than adultery?” He replied: “A person commits adultery and repents thereafter. Allâh ﷻ accepts his repentance. As for the person who backbites, he is not forgiven until the person whom he spoke ill of does not pardon him.” It is therefore incumbent on the backbiter to regret and repent in order to come out of the grasp of Allâh ﷻ, and then to absolve himself from the person whom he spoke ill of so that he may come out of his wrongdoing.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who backbites his fellow Muslim, Allâh ﷻ will turn his face towards his back on the day of resurrection.” It is therefore the duty of the backbiter to seek forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ before he even gets up from that place wherein he engaged in backbiting and even before this backbiting reaches the person whom he spoke ill of. This is because if he repents before it reaches the person whom he spoke ill of, his repentance is accepted. But if it reaches him, he is not absolved of the sin by repentance until the person absolves him. In like manner, when a person commits adultery with a married woman and her husband comes to know of it, the sin of this cannot be absolved by repentance as long as the husband does not forgive him. As for missing out *salâh*, not paying *zakâh*, not fasting, nor performing the pilgrimage – these are not absolved by repentance. Rather, a person has to make up for whatever he has missed of these duties by making *qadâ* (fulfilling) of them. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

ON ZAKÂH



Allâh ﷻ says: “Who continually pay the zakâh.” Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person who owns gold and silver and does not pay his dues thereof, sheets of fire will be rolled out for him on the day of resurrection and he will be burned thereby in the fire of Hell. His body will then be expanded to cover these sheets even if they are many in number. Each time these sheets become cool, they will be reheated for him, on a day that is equivalent to 50 000 years. This will continue until judgement is passed on all the creation. He will then see his path – either to Paradise or to the Hell-fire.”

Allâh ﷻ says: “And those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the path of Allâh, give them glad tidings of a painful punishment. On [that] day their wealth shall be heated in the fire of Hell, and with it shall be branded their foreheads and their sides and their backs. [They shall be told:] ‘This is what you had hoarded up for yourselves. Now taste what you have been hoarding.’” [73]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Destruction to the wealthy ones from the poor ones on the day of resurrection. The poor ones will say: ‘They did not give us our dues which were incumbent on them.’ Allâh ﷻ will say: ‘By My honour and grandeur, I will bring you close to Me, and I will distant them [the wealthy ones] from me.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then recited this verse: ‘And those in whose wealth there is a due portion for the beggar and the dispossessed.’” [74]

It is related that on the night of *mi‘râj*, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by a people who had patches on their backs and fronts. They were grazing like cattle among the *darî‘* (a thorny tree in Hell), the *zaqqûm* (an infernal tree with extremely bitter fruit) and the hot rocks of Hell. He asked: “Who are these people, O Jibra’îl?” He replied: “These are the people who do not

fulfil the charity of their wealth. Allâh ﷻ did not wrong them for Allâh ﷻ does not wrong His servants.”

It is related that a group of Tâbi‘în left in order to visit Abû Sinân. When they went to him and sat near him, he said to them: “Come, let’s go visit a neighbour of ours whose brother passed away. We will console him.” Muhammad ibn Yûsuf al-Quryânî says: “So we got up with him and went to that neighbour. We found him crying profusely and very much perturbed by the death of his brother. We therefore began consoling and comforting him. But he was not accepting any consolation nor any comforting.” So we said to him: “Don’t you know that there is no escape from death?” He replied: “Indeed. However, I am crying because of the punishment that my brother is receiving by day and night.” We asked him: “What!? Has Allâh allowed you to look into the unseen?” He replied: “No. But when I buried him, levelled the soil over him and the people left, I remained seated at his graveside. Suddenly I heard a voice saying: ‘Oh! They have left me alone to suffer the punishment whereas I used to fast and offer salâh.’ His words caused me to cry. I then dug out his grave in order to see what was happening to him. Suddenly I saw the grave glittering with fire, and a necklace of fire around his neck. My brotherly affection prompted me to help him, so I extended my hand in order to remove this necklace from his neck. When I tried doing that, my fingers and hand got burnt.” He then showed us his hand which was black and burnt. “I then filled the soil back onto him and returned. So how can I not cry over his condition, and not grieve over him?” We asked him: “How your brother in this world?” He replied: “He never used to give the zakâh of his wealth.” We replied: “This is the proof of the words of Allâh ﷻ: ‘Those who are miserly with that which Allâh has given them through His grace should not think that this miserliness is good for them. Instead, it is extremely evil for them. That wealth in which they are miserly will be made into a necklace and hung around their necks on the day of resurrection.’ As for your brother, the punishment has been hastened for him in his very grave till the day of resurrection. We then left him and went to Abû Dharr , the Companion of the Messenger of Allâh . We related to him the story of this person and said to him: ‘How is it that a Jew or a Christian passes away but we do not see this happening to him?’ He replied: ‘There is no doubt whatsoever

that they [Jews and Christians] will be in the Hell-fire. However, Allâh ﷻ shows you this with regard to the believers so that you may take an admonishment. Allâh ﷻ says: ‘The signs have come to you from your Sustainer. Whoever, then, sees them, does so for himself. And whoever remains blind, does so to his own detriment. And I am not a guardian over you.’ [\[75\]](#)

It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The person who refuses to give the zakâh is like a Jew and a Christian in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. The person who refuses to pay the ‘*ushr* (one tenth of tax on produce of the land) is like a Magaen in the sight of Allâh. The person who refuses to give the zakâh and ‘*ushr* from his wealth is cursed by the angels and the Prophet ﷺ. And his testimony is not accepted.” He also said: “Glad tidings to him who gives the zakâh and ‘*ushr*. Glad tidings to the one who has no punishment of zakâh and no punishment on the day of resurrection. Whoever gives the zakâh of his wealth, Allâh ﷻ will raise from him the punishment of the grave, Allâh ﷻ will make his flesh unlawful to the Hell-fire, He will make Paradise incumbent on him without any reckoning, and he will not experience any thirst on the day of resurrection.”

ON ADULTERY

Allâh ﷻ says: “Who guard their private parts.” [76] In other words, they guard their private parts from immoral acts and all that is not lawful to them. Allâh ﷻ says in another verse: “do not approach shameful deeds – what is apparent thereof and what is concealed.” [77] In other words, what is major, i.e. adultery, and what is minor, i.e. kissing, touching, looking.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The hands commit adultery, the feet commit adultery and the eyes commit adultery.”

Allâh ﷻ says: “Say to the believers to lower their gazes and to safeguard their private parts. In this there is much purity for them.” [78]

Allâh ﷻ commands the men and women to lower their gazes from the unlawful and to safeguard their private parts from the unlawful. Allâh ﷻ made adultery unlawful through many verses.

Allâh ﷻ says: “And they do not commit adultery. Whoever does that has fallen into sin.” [79] Another meaning of the word “sin” in this context is punishment in the Hell-fire. It is said that it also refers to a valley in Hell. It is said that it also refers to a pit in Hell. When it is opened, the inmates of Hell scream out because of its terrible smell.

One of the Companions y said: “Beware of adultery for it entails six things, three in this world and three in the hereafter. As for the three in this world, they are: (1) decrease in sustenance, (2) curtailment of one’s lifespan, (3) darkness of the face. As for the three in the hereafter, they are: (1) the wrath of Allâh ﷻ, (2) a very strict reckoning, (3) entry into Hell.”

It is related that Mûsâ ﷺ asked: “O my Sustainer! What is the punishment for the person who commits adultery?” Allâh ﷻ replied: “I will make him

wear an armour of fire. If this armour were to be placed on a lofty mountain, it will be reduced to ashes.”

It is related that an immoral woman is more beloved to Satan than a thousand immoral men. It is stated in *al-Masâbîh* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person commits adultery, his î mân leaves him and remains above his head like a cloud. When he leaves that act, î mân returns to him.”

The book, *al-Iqnâ‘*, states that the Prophet ﷺ said: “There is no sin that is more serious in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than a sperm which a person places in the womb of someone who is unlawful to him.”

Homosexuality is more severe than adultery. Anas ibn Mâlik ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The person who commits homosexuality will not get the fragrance of Paradise although its fragrance is experienced from the distance of a journey of 500 years.”

Qâdî Imâm *rahimahullâh* said: “I heard a shaykh saying: ‘There is one Satan with every woman, while there are 18 Satans with every young boy.’”

It is related that the person who kisses a young boy with desire, Allâh ﷻ shall punish him in the Hell-fire for 500 years. The person who kisses a woman with desire is like one who committed adultery with 70 virgins. The person who commits adultery with a virgin is as though he committed adultery with 70 000 non-virgins.

It is stated in *Raunaq at-Tafâsîr* that al-Kalbî said: The first person to commit homosexuality was Satan, may Allâh ﷻ curse him. He appeared before the people in the form of a young, handsome boy and then invited them to himself. So they married him and this became their habit with every stranger. Allâh ﷻ sent Lût ؑ to them. He prohibited them from this act and invited them towards the worship of Allâh ﷻ. He warned them that if they persisted in their sin, the punishment of Allâh ﷻ will descend upon them. They replied: “Bring the punishment of Allâh upon us if you are really truthful.” Lût ؑ then asked Allâh ﷻ to help him against them. He

said: "O my Sustainer! Help me against these corrupt people." Allâh ﷻ ordered the skies to rain down stones upon them. Each stone was imprinted with the name of the person who was to be pelted with it. This is the meaning of the words: "Marked by your Sustainer." [80] In other words, they had marks (or signs) in the treasures of Allâh ﷻ or in His orders.

It is related that a businessman from Lût's ﷻ people was in Makkah [at the time of the punishment that was inflicted on the people]. So a stone came to strike him in the sanctuary of Makkah. The angels said to this stone: "Return from where you have come because this person is in the sanctuary of Allâh ﷻ." The stone returned and remained waiting between the heavens and earth outside the sanctuary of Makkah for 40 days. When the man completed his business and left, the stone struck him outside the sanctuary and destroyed him.

When Lût ﷻ left the town his wife also followed him. He had prohibited all those who followed him from turning around [and looking at the punishment that was befalling the people]. They all obeyed except for his wife. When she heard the punishment descending, she turned around and said: "O my people!" A stone came and struck her head, thereby killing her.

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* says: "When the people woke up in the morning, Jibra'îl ﷻ went to the town and uprooted it from its pillars. He then inserted his wings from beneath and carried the entire town on the edges of his wings. He then climbed up with it towards the sky to such an extent that the inhabitants of the sky heard the quacking of their ducks and the barking of their dogs. He then turned the town upside down. The first to fall down was their canopies. No nation was punished in this way. Allâh ﷻ then blotted out their eyesight. Their town was then turned upside down. This town comprised of five districts, the biggest of which was Sodom. It is said that it had a population of 400 000.

ON MAINTAINING FAMILY TIES AND THE RIGHTS OF PARENTS

Allâh ﷻ says: “Continually fear Allâh through Whom you ask of one another, and be mindful of your relatives.” [81] In other words, fear breaking off ties with your relatives.

Allâh ﷻ says: “It is also expected of you that when you are given authority, you will cause corruption in the land and sever your relations Such are those whom Allâh cursed. He thus made them deaf and made their eyes blind.” [82]

Allâh ﷻ says: “Who break the covenant of Allâh after its strengthening, and sever that which Allâh has ordered to be joined and make mischief in the land, it is they who are the losers.” [83]

Allâh ﷻ says: “Those who break the covenant of Allâh after its strengthening, and sever that which Allâh ordered to be joined, and make mischief in the land, it is they who are cursed and for them is an evil abode.” [84]

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate on the authority of Abû Hurayrah ؓ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ created the entire creation. When He completed creating them, family ties stood up and said: ‘This is the place of the person who seeks refuge in You from being severed.’ Allâh ﷻ said: ‘Yes. Will it not please you that I maintain those who maintain ties with you and I sever those who sever you?’ Family ties replied: ‘Indeed.’ Allâh ﷻ said: ‘That will be for you.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: ‘Read the following verse if you wish: ‘It is also expected of you that when you are given authority, you will cause corruption in the land and sever your relations Such are those whom Allâh cursed. He thus made them deaf and made their eyes blind.’” [85] This Hadîth is also related by Imâm Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* who said that it is a good and authentic Hadîth. It is also related by Imâm Ibn Mâjah



rahimahullâh. Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* also narrated it and said that it has an authentic chain of narrators.




Abû Bakrah رضي الله عنه says that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no sin more deserving to be punished for in this world together with the punishment that is in store in the hereafter than rebellion and severing of relationships.” Another Hadîth states: “The person who severs will not enter Paradise.” Sufyân said: “In other words, the person who severs relationships.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates through reliable narrators that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The deeds of mankind are presented every Thursday and the night before Friday. The deeds of the person who severs relationships are not accepted.”



Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Three types of people will not enter Paradise: the one who is addicted to intoxicants, the person who severs relationships and the person who believes in magic.”


Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Abî Dunyâ *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A group from this *ummah* will spend the night eating, drinking, playing and amusing themselves. The next morning they would have been distorted into monkeys and pigs. The punishments of being swallowed by the earth and pelted will afflict them to such an extent that people will say: ‘So and so family was swallowed by the earth last night. The house of so and so was swallowed by the earth last night. Stones will be sent upon them from the skies as they were sent upon the people of Lût عليه السلام. These stones will rain upon specific tribes and specific houses. A wind that is devoid of any goodness which destroyed the ‘Âd nation will be sent upon specific tribes and specific houses on account of their consuming intoxicants, wearing silk, taking singing women, devouring interest, severing family ties, and another practice which Ja‘far [the narrator forgot].”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates in his *al-Awsat* that Jâbir  said: “Once, the Messenger of Allâh  came to us when we were sitting together. He addressed us saying: ‘O group of Muslims! Fear Allâh and maintain your family ties for there is no reward swifter than maintaining family ties. Beware of rebellion for there is no punishment swifter than the punishment for rebellion. Beware of disobeying parents. Surely the fragrance of Paradise is experienced from a distance of 1000 year’s journey. By Allâh, the person who disobeys his parents, the person who severs family ties, an old man who commits adultery, and the person who allows his lower garment [pants or trousers] to drag below his ankles will not experience the fragrance of Paradise. Surely, pride is reserved for Allâh, the Sustainer of the worlds.’”



Al-Asbahânî *rahimahullâh* narrates: “We were sitting with the Messenger of Allâh  when he said: ‘A person who has severed family ties should not sit with us today.’ So a young man got up from the circle and went to an aunt of his with whom he had some argument. He asked her for forgiveness and she forgave him. He then returned to the assembly. The Prophet  then said: ‘The mercy of Allâh  does not descend on a people among whom a person who severs family ties is sitting.’”



At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates: “The angels do not descend on a people among whom a person who severs family ties is sitting.”



At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates through an authentic chain on the authority of al-A‘mash who said: “Ibn Mas‘ûd  was sitting after the *fajr salâh* in a circle of people. He said: ‘I take an oath in the name of Allâh  that the person who has severed family ties should leave our assembly because we want to supplicate to our Sustainer, for surely the gates of the heavens are closed to the person who severs family ties.’”




Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate: “Family ties is suspended to the throne of Allâh  saying: ‘May Allâh maintain the person who maintains me. May Allâh sever the person who severs me.’” This Hadîth is also narrated by Imâm Abû Dâ‘ûd



rahimahullâh and Imâm Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*. The latter says that this is a good and authentic Hadîth.

‘Abd ar-Rahmân ibn ‘Auf  says: “I heard the Messenger of Allâh  saying: ‘Allâh says: ‘I am Allâh. I am the merciful. I created family ties and derived its name from My name. So I shall maintain he who maintains it, and sever he who severs it.’”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates through an authentic chain that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “The worst form of interest is looking out for ways to unduly disparage a Muslim. This family ties is an interlocking tree from the Merciful [Allâh]. Allâh  makes Paradise unlawful to the person who severs it.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Family ties is an interlocking tree from the Merciful. It says: ‘O my Sustainer! I have been severed. O my Sustainer! I have been wronged. O my Sustainer! I have been oppressed. O my Sustainer! O my Sustainer!’ Allâh  replied by saying: ‘Are you not pleased that I will maintain he who maintains you, and sever he who severs you?’”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Family ties is a curved needle holding on to the throne of Allâh . It speaks with an eloquent tongue: ‘O Allâh! Maintain the one who maintains me, sever the one who severs me.’ Allâh  replies: ‘I am the Merciful, the Beneficent. I derived the name family ties from My name. Therefore, I shall maintain he who maintains it and sever he who severs it.’”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “There are three things that are holding on to the throne of Allâh : (1) Family ties. It says: ‘O Allâh! I am holding on to You, I should therefore not be severed.’ (2) Trustworthiness. It says: ‘O Allâh! I am holding on to You, I should therefore not be cheated.’ (3) Bounties. It says: ‘O Allâh! I

am holding on to you, ungratefulness should therefore not be shown to me.’”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A stamp is suspended on the pillar of the throne. When family ties complains, when evils are committed and when people become audacious towards Allâh ﷻ, He send this stamp in order to stamp the person’s heart [who commits any of these sins]. He therefore cannot comprehend anything thereafter.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who believes in Allâh ﷻ and the last day should be hospitable to his guest. He who believes in Allâh ﷻ and the last day should maintain his family ties. He who believes in Allâh ﷻ and the last day should say good words or else, remain silent.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who likes that his sustenance be expanded for him and his life-span be extended should maintain his family ties.”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: “He who likes that his sustenance be expanded for him and his life-span be extended should maintain his family ties.” Narrated by Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*. The words as related by Imâm Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* are: “Learn of your lineage whereby you could maintain your family ties. Surely the maintaining of family ties creates love among the family, increases wealth and gives extension in life-span.”

‘Abdullâh ibn Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates in *Zawâ'id al-Musnad*, al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* through a good chain, and al-Hakim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who likes that his life-span be extended, his sustenance be expanded and an evil death be repulsed from him should fear Allâh ﷻ and maintain his family ties.”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The following is written in the Taurâh: ‘He who likes that his life-span and sustenance be expanded should maintain his family ties.’”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “It is through charity and maintaining family ties that Allâh ﷻ gives expansion in life, repulses an evil death, and repulses disliked and dangerous things.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates on the authority of a person from Khath‘am who said: “I came to the Prophet ﷺ while he was in the company of his Companions. I said to him: ‘Are you the one who claims that you are the Messenger of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ I asked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Which deeds are the most beloved in the sight of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘Belief in Allâh.’ I asked: ‘Then which deed, O Messenger of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘Maintaining family ties.’ I asked: ‘Which deeds are most disliked to Allâh ﷻ?’ He replied: ‘Ascribing partners to Allâh.’ I asked: ‘Then which deed, O Messenger of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘Severing family ties.’ I asked: ‘Then which deed, O Messenger of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘Commanding evil and prohibiting good.’”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate: A Bedouin came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ while he was on a journey, he took hold of the camel’s halter or its reins and then said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Or, O Muhammad! Tell me of something that would take me closer to Paradise and further away from the Hell-fire.” The Prophet ﷺ stopped, looked among his Companions and said: “This person has been inspired, or he has been guided. What was your question?” He repeated it, so the Prophet ﷺ said: “That you worship Allâh ﷻ without ascribing anything to Him, you establish the salâh, you give the zakâh and you maintain family ties...You may now leave the camel.” Another narration states: “and you maintain your family ties.” When this person turned around to leave, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If he holds on to what I ordered him, he shall enter Paradise.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ causes a people to inhabit homes and increases wealth for them, and He never looked at them with hatred from the time He created them.” He was asked: “How is that, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “Because of their maintaining their family ties.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who has been blessed with kindness has been given his share of the best of this world and the hereafter. Maintaining family ties, being a good neighbour and having good character are qualities that cause homes to be inhabited [closely knit families] and increase the life-span.”

Abû ash-Shaykh *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who is the best of people?” He replied: “He among you who is most fearful of his Sustainer, who maintains family ties the most, who commands good the most, and who prohibits evil the most.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrate on the authority of Abû Dharr ؓ who said: “My beloved friend, [the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ] advised me to adopt certain good qualities: he advised me not to look at he who is above me. I should rather look at he who is below me. He advised me to love the poor and to remain close to them. He advised me to maintain my family ties even if they turn away. He advised me not to fear the criticism of critics in matters concerning Allâh ﷻ. He advised me to say the truth even if it is bitter. He advised me to read the following supplication profusely for it is one of the treasures of Paradise:

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

“There is no strength and power except from Allâh.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate on the authority of Maymûnah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* that she freed a girl that belonged to her without seeking permission from the Prophet ﷺ.

When it was her day in which he came to her, she said to him: “O Messenger of Allâh! Did you hear that I freed the girl that belonged to me?” He replied: “Yes. However, had you given her to your maternal aunts, it would have been more rewarding for you.”

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that a person came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: “I have committed a very serious sin. Is there a chance for me to repent?” He asked: “Do you have a mother?” He replied: “No.” He asked: “Do you have a maternal aunt?” He replied: “Yes.” He said: “Go and be dutiful to her.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person who maintains family ties with those who maintain them with him is not a true maintainer of family ties. Rather, a true maintainer is he who maintains ties with those who sever ties with him.”

Imâm Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates: “Do not be opportunists by saying: ‘If people are good to us, we will be good to them. If they wrong us, we will wrong them.’ Rather, you should habituate yourselves into doing good to those who are good to you, and that if they wrong you, you do not wrong them.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates [that a person asked]: “O Messenger of Allâh! I have relatives with whom I maintain family ties. However, they sever ties with me. I do good to them, but they do harm to me. I am forbearing towards them, but they act ignorantly towards me.” He replied: “If you really are as you say, then it is as though you are placing hot ash in their mouths. Allâh ﷻ will always remain your helper against them as long as you remain like this.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Khuzaymah *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate: “The best charity is to one’s relative who bears internal enmity towards you.” This is the meaning of the Prophet’s ﷺ words: “That you maintain family ties with those who sever them.”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh*, at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If three

qualities are found in a person, Allâh ﷻ will give him a very easy reckoning and enter him into Paradise by His mercy.” The Companions y asked: “What are these qualities, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “You give to the one who deprives you, you maintain family ties with the one who severs them, and you pardon the one who wrongs you. If you do this, He will admit you into Paradise.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates on the authority of ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Âmir ؓ who said: “I met the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ so I held his hand and asked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Tell me what the most virtuous deeds are.’ He replied: ‘O ‘Uqbah! Maintain family ties with the one who severs you, give to the one who deprives you, pardon the one who wrongs you.’” al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* adds: “Listen! The person who desires that his life-span be extended and his sustenance be expanded should maintain his family ties.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates: “Should I not show you the noblest qualities of this world and the hereafter? Maintain family ties with the one who severs you, give to the one who deprives you, and pardon the one who wrongs you.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates: “The most virtuous of deeds is that you maintain family ties with he who severs you, you give to the one who deprives you and you pardon the one who is abusive towards you.”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates: “Should I not show you that with which Allâh ﷻ raises the ranks?” And according to a narration of at-Tabarânî: “Should I not inform you of that with which Allâh ﷻ elevates buildings and raises the ranks?” The Companions yreplied: “Indeed, O Messenger of Allâh!” He replied: “You be forbearing to the one who acts ignorantly towards you, you pardon the one who wrongs you, you give to the one who deprives you, you maintain family ties with the one who severs you.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The good that is swiftest in procuring reward is being dutiful and

maintaining family ties. The evil that is swiftest in procuring punishment is rebellion and severing family ties.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no sin more deserving that its punishment be hastened in this world together with the punishment that is in store for him in the hereafter than severing family ties, treachery and lying. And the good that is swiftest in procuring reward is maintaining family ties. So much so that even if members of a family are sinful, their wealth increases and their numbers increase if they maintain family ties.”

ON BEING DUTIFUL TO PARENTS

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه who said: I asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: “Which deed is the most beloved to Allâh ﷻ?” He replied: “Offering salâh at its appropriate time.” I asked: “Then which deed?” He replied: “Being dutiful to parents.” I asked: “Then which deed?” He replied: “Waging jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”


Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate: “A child cannot compensate his father unless he finds him enslaved, and so he purchases him and frees him.”



Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates: “A person came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: “I pledge allegiance to you on emigrating and waging jihâd. I seek reward from Allâh ﷻ [for this].” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Are any of your parents living?” He replied: “Yes. In fact both of them are living.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “And you seek reward from Allâh?” He replied: “Yes.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Go back to them and remain a good companion to them.”




Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* and at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrate: “A person came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: “I wish to go out for jihâd but I am unable to do so.” He asked: “Are any of your parents alive?” He replied: “My mother.” He said: “Ask Allâh ﷻ to assist you in being dutiful towards her. If you are dutiful to her, you will be a person who is performing the pilgrimage, the lesser pilgrimage (*‘umrah*) and waging jihâd.”




At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates: A person asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! I want to wage jihâd in the cause of Allâh.” He asked: “Is your mother alive?” He replied: “Yes.” He said: “Remain at her feet, for that is where Paradise lies.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates: “A person asked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! What is the right of parents over their children?’ He replied: ‘They are your Paradise and your Hell-fire.’”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate: A person asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! I am deciding to go for jihâd. I have come to consult with you in this regard.” He asked: “Do you have a mother?” He replied: “Remain constantly with her, for Paradise lies at her feet.” In another authentic narration: He  asked: “Do you have parents?” He replied: “Yes.” He said: “remain constantly with them, for Paradise lies beneath their feet.”

Imâm Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates on the authority of Abû ad-Dardâ’  that a person came to him and said: “I have a wife and my mother is ordering me to divorce her.” I said: “I heard the Messenger of Allâh  saying: ‘The parent is the centre door to Paradise. If you wish, you may destroy that door or you could safeguard it [the choice is yours].’”

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrates that a person came to Abû Dârdâ’  and said: “My father persisted upon me to marry a particular woman. Now that I am married to her, he is ordering me to divorce her.” Abû Dardâ’  replied: “I am not ordering you to disobey your parent nor am I ordering you to divorce your wife. However, if you wish, I can relate what I heard from the Messenger of Allâh . I heard him saying: ‘The parent is the centre door to Paradise. If you wish, you may safeguard that door or if you wish, you could destroy it.’” I think ‘Atâ’ [the narrator] said: “The person divorced her.”

Imâm Tirmidhî, Imâm Nasa’î, Imâm Ibn Mâjah, Imâm Abû Dâ’ûd and Ibn Hibbân *rahimahumullâh* narrate that Ibn ‘Umar  said: “I had a wife whom I loved. But ‘Umar [my father], disliked her. He therefore asked me to divorce her. But I refused. ‘Umar went to the Messenger of Allâh  and related this to him. The Messenger of Allâh  said to me: ‘Divorce her.’”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates: “He who would like that his life-span be extended and his sustenance be expanded should be dutiful to his parents

and maintain his family ties.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh*, al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to the person who is dutiful to his parents. Allâh gives him extension in his life-span.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person is deprived of sustenance because of a sin that he commits. Nothing but supplication can repulse fate. Nothing but being dutiful can extend the life-span.”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Abstain from committing indecency with the women of others, people will abstain from committing indecency with your women. Be dutiful to your parents, your children will be dutiful to you. He to whom his fellow Muslim comes, should accept him irrespective of whether he was right or wrong. If he does not do this, he will not come to the fount [of abundance on the day of resurrection].”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be dutiful to your parents, your children will be dutiful to you. Desist from other women, people will desist from your women.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “May his nose be soiled in the ground. May his nose be soiled in the ground. May his nose be soiled in the ground.” He was asked: “Who, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “He whose both parents or one of them reaches old age in his presence but he is still unable to enter Paradise. Or, they do not admit him into Paradise.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates: The Prophet ﷺ climbed the pulpit and said: “Amen. Amen. Amen.” He then said: “Jibra’îl عليه السلام came to me and said: ‘O Muhammad! The person whose either parent gets old and he is not dutiful to him, shall enter the Hell-fire when he dies. May Allâh keep him far away [from His mercy]. Say, Amen.’ So I said: ‘Amen.’ He then said:

‘O Muhammad! The person who experiences the month of Ramadân and passes away without being forgiven is entered into the Hell-fire. May Allâh keep him far away [from His mercy]. Say, Amen.’ So I said: ‘Amen.’ He then said: ‘The person in whose presence your name is mentioned and he does not send salutation to you, shall enter the Hell-fire when he dies. May Allâh keep him far away [from His mercy]. Say, Amen.’ So I said: ‘Amen.’”

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* also narrated this Hadîth but he narrates it thus: “The person whose parents or either one of them gets old and he is not dutiful to them, shall enter the Hell-fire when he dies. May Allâh keep him far away [from His mercy]. Say, Amen.’ So I said: ‘Amen.’”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* and others narrated this Hadîth as follows: “When I climbed the third step [of the pulpit], he said: ‘The person whose both parents or either one of them gets old in his presence and they are unable to admit him into Paradise.’ I said: ‘Amen.’”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates as follows: “The person whose parents or either one of them gets old and he is not dutiful to them shall enter the Hell-fire. May Allâh keep him far away [from His mercy]. And may He destroy him.’ I said: ‘Amen.’”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person frees a Muslim slave the latter will be his ransom from the Hell-fire. The person who has either of his parents and is still not forgiven, may Allâh keep him far away [from His mercy] and may He destroy him.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate that a person asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who is the most deserving of my companionship?” He replied: “Your mother.” He asked: “Then who?” He replied: “Your mother.” He asked: “Then who?” He replied: “Your mother.” He asked: “Then who?” He replied: “Your father.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate on the authority of Asmâ’ bint Abî Bakr *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* who said: “My mother came to visit me during the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when

she was still a polytheist. I therefore went to ask him the ruling in this regard. I said to him: ‘My mother has come to visit me while she is averse to Islam. Shall I maintain my ties with my mother?’ He replied: ‘Yes, maintain your ties with your mother.’”

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The pleasure of Allâh lies in obtaining the pleasure of the parent, or he said, the parents. The displeasure of Allâh results from the displeasure of the parent, or he said, the parents.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Obedience to Allâh lies in obedience to the parent, or he said, the parents. Disobedience to Him lies in disobedience to the parent, or he said, the parents.”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The pleasure of the Sustainer ﷻ lies in the pleasure of the parents and the displeasure of the Sustainer ﷻ lies in the displeasure of the parents.”

Imâm Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate: A person came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: “I have committed a very serious sin. Will my repentance be accepted?” He asked: “Do you have a mother?” He replied: “No.” He asked: “Do you have a maternal aunt?” He replied: “Yes.” He said: “Be dutiful to her.”

Imâm Abû Dâ’ûd *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrate that a person asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Is there any way of showing my duty to my parents after they have passed away?” He replied: “Yes. You must supplicate for them, seek forgiveness for them, fulfil their promises after them, maintain the family ties that can only be done through them, and honour their friends.” Ibn Hibbân narrates this Hadîth with some addition: “[On hearing this], the man said: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! There is so much that I can do, and how nice all this is!’ He said: ‘So act on all this.’”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that a Bedouin person met ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ﷺ on the road to Makkah. ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ﷺ greeted him

and put him on the donkey which he was riding. He also gave him a turban which he was wearing. Ibn Dînâr says: “We said to ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar: May Allâh ﷻ set right your affairs. He is a Bedouin and these Bedouins are happy with a little [did you have to do so much for him?]' ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ﷺ replied: ‘This person’s father was a friend of [my father] ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ and I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘One of the best ways of duty is for the child to maintain ties with the friends of his father.’”

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrates on the authority of Abû Burdah ﷺ who said: “When I came to Madinah , ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ﷺ came to meet me. He then said: ‘Do you know why I came to meet you?’ I replied: ‘No.’ He said: ‘I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘The person who would like to maintain ties with his father in his grave should maintain ties with his father’s friends after his death.’ Now my father, ‘Umar, and your father were very close friends and brothers. I therefore desired to maintain these ties.”

There is a famous Hadîth narrated by Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others: There were three persons from one of the nations before us. They went out walking and moving about in search of sustenance for their families. Suddenly it began raining heavily so they sort refuge in a cave in a mountain. After they entered it, a rock fell on the mouth of the cave and sealed the entrance [whereby they could not come out]. So they said to themselves: ‘There is nothing that can save you from this rock except supplicating to Allâh ﷻ through your good deeds.’ In another narration, one of them said to the others: ‘Look at your good deeds which you did solely for Allâh ﷻ and then supplicate to Him through these good deeds. Perhaps He will move this rock.’ Another narration states that one of them said: ‘Our footsteps have been wiped out [by the rain, so no one can know that we are here] and the rock has fallen on the mouth of the cave. None but Allâh knows your position. Therefore supplicate to Allâh ﷻ through the deed which you consider to be most effective.’ So one of them said: ‘O Allâh! I had very old parents. It was my habit not to give milk to my family and possessions [slaves and animals] before giving them to drink. One day, the quest for pastureland caused me to go out quite far. I

therefore only returned home when they [my parents] had already fallen asleep. I milked the animal for their evening drink and found them [still] sleeping. I did not want to wake them up nor did I want to have my evening drink before them – neither me nor my family and possessions [slaves and animals]. I therefore remained with the bowl in my hand, waiting for them to wake up. [I continued waiting] until the break of dawn. My parents then woke up and drank their milk. O Allâh! If I did this solely for Your pleasure, then remove this rock which has entrapped us.’ The rock then moved a little, but they were unable to come out. Another narration states: ‘I had small children. I used to tend to the sheep. When I returned in the evening, I would milk the sheep, commence with my parents, giving them to drink before my children. One day the quest for pastureland caused me to go out quite far. I therefore only returned late in the evening. I found them already sleeping. I milked the animals as I used to and I brought the milk to them. I stood at their bed side not wanting to wake them up from their sleep. At the same time, I did not want to give the children the milk before giving it to my parents. The children were crying at my feet [out of hunger]. I continued waiting for them and they continued sleeping till the break of dawn. O Allâh! If You know that I did this solely for Your pleasure, remove this rock from us so that we can see the sky.’ Allâh ﷻ moved the rock slightly so that they could see the sky.

The second person mentioned how he abstained from committing adultery with his cousin. The third person mentioned how he invested his labourer’s wage [for the benefit of his labourer]. The entire rock then moved and they were able to come out walking.

ON ZAKÂH AND MISERLINESS

Allâh ﷻ says: “Those who are miserly with that which Allâh has given them through His grace should not think that this miserliness is good for them. Instead, it is extremely evil for them. That wealth in which they are miserly will be made into a necklace and hung around their necks on the day of resurrection.” [86] Allâh ﷻ says: “And destruction to the polytheists who do not give the zakâh.” [87]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person does not give the zakâh for his wealth, it will be transformed into a huge and bald person who will be neck-laced around him on the day of resurrection.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O group of *Muhâjirûn* (Emigrants)! There are five qualities which if you are tested with and if they afflict you, I seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ that you experience these five qualities. (1) When indecency [and immorality] becomes prevalent in a people to the extent that they openly announce it, then various illnesses which were unheard of among past peoples will spread among them. (2) When they give less in weight and measure, they shall experience droughts, difficulties in earning a living and the tyranny of rulers. (3) When they refuse to pay the zakâh of their wealth, they shall be denied rains from the skies. Were it not for the animals, they would never receive any rain. (4) When they break the ordinance of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, foreign enemies will be given free reign over them and who would then take away some of the things which they possess. (5) When their leaders do not pass judgement in accordance with the Book of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh shall cause differences in their ranks.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ abhors the person who is miserly in his life time but generous at the time of his death.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are two qualities that should never be combined in a believer: miserliness and bad character.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ has taken an oath that a miser will not enter Paradise.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Beware of miserliness for it caused a nation to refuse to pay their zakâh, it caused them to sever their family ties, and it caused them to shed their blood.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ created wretchedness and surrounded it with miserliness and wealth.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* was asked about miserliness. He replied: “It entails a person considering whatever he spent to be a loss and whatever he held back to be a source of honour.” The essence of miserliness is love of wealth, having high hopes, fear of poverty and love of children.”

A Hadîth states that children cause a person to become cowardly and miserly. Among people is he who has no concern whatsoever about giving the zakâh of his wealth, being kind to his own self and even to his own family. His enjoyment and desire is in looking at his money and it being in his possession. This, despite the fact that he knows that he is going to die. It is with regard to such people that a poet says:

أأخى إن من الرجال بحيمة - في صورة الرجل اللبيب المبصر
فطن بكل مصيبة في ماله - فإذا أصيب بدينه لم يشعر

“O my brother! From among people is he who is an animal in the form of an intelligent, watchful human. He is afflicted with every calamity in his wealth [to such an extent] that when he is afflicted by his religion, he does not even perceive it.”

Another poet says:

البخل داء دوي لا يليق بذي - مروءة لا ولا عقل ولا دين
من آثر البخل عن وفر وعن جدة - فقد لعمري أضحي وهو مغبون
يا يؤس من منع الدارين حقهما - فباع دنياه بعد الدين بالدون

“Miserliness is a serious affliction that is not befitting a person of self-honour, intelligence and Islam. The person who prefers miserliness despite having abundance and modernity, then I take an oath that he is certainly deceived. O the wretchedness of the person who refuses to fulfil the rights of both the worlds – after having Islam, he purchases this world with something paltry.”

Another poet says:

إذا المال لم ينفع صديقا ولم يصب - قريبا ولم يجبر به حال معدم
فعقابه إن تحتازه كف وارث - وللباخل الموروث عقي التندم

“If wealth is of no use to a friend, if it is not given to a relative, and if it is not used to help a needy person to get back on his feet, then the consequence of this wealth is that it will go into the share of the inheritor’s palm. As for the miserly person whose wealth has been inherited [by others], his consequence will be remorse.”

Bishr *rahimahullâh* said: “Meeting a miserly person is a painful experience and looking at him hardens the heart.” The Arabs used to consider miserliness and cowardice to be serious blemishes. A poet says:

أنفق ولا تحش إقلاقا فقد قسمت - على العباد من الرحمن أرزاق
لا ينفع البخل مع دنيا مولية - ولا يضر مع الإقبال إنفاق

“Spend and do not fear poverty for the provisions from the Merciful have already been distributed among the servants. Miserliness is of no use in a world that is turning away. Spending will be of no harm while you are moving forward.”

Another poet says:

أرى الناس خلان الجواد ولا أرى - بخيلا له في العالمين خليل
وإني رأيت البخل يزري بأهله - فأكرمت نفسي أن يقال بخيل

“I see people friendly towards those who are generous. As for the miserly person, I see that he has no friend whatsoever in the entire universe. I have seen miserliness disgracing those who are miserly. I therefore honoured my self [through generosity] lest I am referred to as a miser.”

It is sufficient for a miser to be considered to be a mean person by way of hoarding wealth for others [those who will inherit it from him], that he bears the ignominy of his own suffering [by not spending on his own self as well], and does not experience the enjoyment of his abundance and well-being. It is with regard to people like him that Wakî‘ said:

لئيم لا يزال يلم وفرًا - لوارثه ويدفع عن حماه
ككلب الصيد يمسك وهو طاو - فريسته ليأكلها سواه

“He is mean and he continues hoarding in abundance for his inheritors and repels his protectors. Like a hunting dog, which despite starving itself, holds on to its prey so that others may eat it.”

There is a saying that the wealth of a miser rejoices by an incident [that would cause the wealth to come out of his hands] or by an inheritor [who would inherit that wealth]. Imâm Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh* said: “I cannot see myself doing justice to a miser because miserliness prompts him to make a minute investigation. He would then take more than what is his due out of fear that he may be cheated. Therefore, a person who is like this cannot be completely trustworthy.”

Yahyâ عليه السلام met Satan so he asked him: “O Satan! Tell me who is most beloved to you and who is most abhorred in your sight.” He replied: “The most beloved to me is a believer who is a miser. The most abhorred in my sight is the open sinner who is generous.” Yahyâ عليه السلام asked him: “Why is

this so?" He replied: "Because the miserliness of a miser has sufficed me. While the open sinner who is generous – I fear that Allâh will look at him while he is generous and then turn to him." Satan then turned away and said: "Were it not for the fact that you are Yahyâ, I would not have informed you."

ON HAVING HIGH HOPES

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The two things which I fear most against you are high hopes and following of desires. High hopes cause a person to forget the hereafter while following desires turns him away from the truth.”


The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I guarantee three people with three things. For he who is engrossed in this world, he who hankers after it, and he who is covetous of it. [I guarantee these three things]: poverty after which there is no prosperity, occupation from which there is no rest, worry from which there is no escape.”




It is related with regard to Abû Dardâ' ؓ that when he went to Hims he said to the residents of this city: “Are you not ashamed of yourselves? You are constructing buildings in which you will not live, you are hoping that which you cannot achieve, and you are hoarding that which you cannot eat. Surely those who were before you built fortified buildings, they hoarded a lot, and they had very high and lengthy hopes. However, their dwellings became graves, their hopes became deceptions and all that they hoarded perished.”




‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ؓ said to ‘Umar ؓ: “If you want to meet your two companions [the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and Abû Bakr ؓ], you should patch your clothing, you should mend your shoes, you should shorten your hopes, and you should eat less than your fill.”


Âdam ؑ advised his son, Shîth ؑ, with five things and ordered him to give this advice to his progeny after him. He said: “Say to your children: (1) Do not rely and depend on this world, for I relied on the everlasting Paradise and so Allâh ﷻ expelled me from it. (2) Do not act on the desires of your women, for I acted on the desire of my woman and I ate from the [forbidden] tree, and so I had to regret. (3) Every action that you intend doing, think about its consequence. Had I thought about the consequence of



my action, I would not have been afflicted with what I was afflicted. (4) When your heart trembles at doing something, desist from it. When I ate from the tree, my heart trembled but I did not desist. And so, remorse afflicted me. (5) Consult others in your matters, for had I consulted the angels, I would not have been afflicted with what I was afflicted.”

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* said that ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar  said to him: “When you get up in the morning, do not think about the evening. When evening comes, do not think about the next morning. Take maximum benefit from your life before death overtakes you. Take maximum benefit from your health before illness overtakes you. For you do not even know what your name is going to be tomorrow.”




The Messenger of Allâh  asked his Companions y: “Does each one of you want to go into Paradise?” They replied: “Yes, O Messenger of Allâh!” He said: “Shorten your hopes and feel shy for Allâh  as you ought to feel shy.” They said: “All of us are shy of Allâh .



” He said: “That is not shyness. True shyness of Allâh  means that you remember the graves and the calamities, that you safeguard the stomach and whatever it holds, and that you safeguard the head and whatever it contains. Whoever desires the honour of the hereafter abstains from the splendour of this world. It is then that a person is truly shy of Allâh . And it is through this that a person acquires the true friendship of Allâh .”





The Messenger of Allâh  said: “The first well-being of this *ummah* shall be through abstinence and conviction. The destruction of the latter *ummah* will be through miserliness and high hopes.”

Umm al-Mundhir *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates: “The Messenger of Allâh  appeared before the people one night and said: ‘O people! Are you not ashamed of Allâh .

’ They asked: ‘What is that, O Messenger of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘You are hoarding that which you cannot eat, you are hoping that which you cannot acquire, and you are building that which you cannot live in.’”

Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî  said that Usâmah ibn Zayd purchased a female slave from Zayd ibn Thâbit for 100 dinars for a month. I then heard the Messenger of Allâh  saying: ‘Are you not surprised at Usâmah who is purchasing something for one month? Surely Usâmah has very high hopes. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my soul, each time I open my eyes, I think that the eyelashes will not meet again [I will not be able to close my eyes again] whereby Allâh  will take away my soul. Each time I raise my eyes, I think that I cannot lower them before my life is taken away. Each time I take a morsel of food, I think that I cannot digest it before I am choked by it to death.’ He then said: ‘O progeny of Âdam! If you really have intelligence, consider yourselves to be among the dead. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my soul, the promise that has been made to you [of death] shall certainly be realized. And you will not be able to tire [Allâh].’”

Ibn ‘Abbâs  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  would [sometimes] spill water and so he would resort to soil. I would tell him, O Messenger of Allâh! Here, [more] water is quite close to you. He would reply: “How do I know, I might not reach it [death would overtake me before I reach it].”

It is said that ‘Îsâ  was sitting and an old man was shovelling the ground with a spade. ‘Îsâ  said: “O Allâh! Remove hope from him.” So the old man kept the spade aside, lied down and remained like that for some time.” ‘Îsâ  then said: “O Allâh! Return hope to him.” The old man got up and began working. So ‘Îsâ  asked him about these actions of his. He replied: “While I was doing my work, my soul said to me: ‘For how long are you going to work, while you are such an old man?’ I therefore threw the spade aside and lied down. Then my soul said to me: ‘By Allâh! You still have needs as long as you live.’ I therefore got up and took my spade again.”

ON REMAINING STEADFAST ON OBEDIENCE AND GIVING UP THE PROHIBITED

Obedience means fulfilling the compulsory injunctions of Allâh ﷻ, abstaining from His prohibitions, and remaining within the limits set by Him. With regard to the verse: “and do not forget your portion of this world”[\[88\]](#) Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* said: “It means that a person should act in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ.”

You should know that the essence of obedience is knowledge of Allâh ﷻ, fear of Allâh ﷻ, hope in Allâh ﷻ, and being constantly vigilant about Allâh ﷻ. If a person is devoid of these qualities, he will not acquire the reality of îmân. This is because obedience to Allâh ﷻ is not valid except after having knowledge of Him, believing in His existence as the creator, knower, and all-powerful being whose knowledge cannot be encompassed and cannot even be imagined, that there is nothing similar to Him, and that He alone is all-hearing and all-seeing.

A Bedouin said to Muhammad ibn ‘Alî ibn al-Husayn y: “Did you see Allâh ﷻ when you worshipped Him?” He replied: “I will not worship someone I cannot see.” He asked: “How did you see Him?” He replied: “The sight does not see Him with the witness of the eyes. Rather, it is the hearts that see Him with the essence of îmân. He is not perceived by the senses. He cannot be likened to the people. He is known by signs and described by indications. He is not conceivable in matters. That is Allâh, there is none worthy of worship but Him. He is the Sustainer of the earth and heavens.” The Bedouin replied: “Allâh ﷻ knows best where He placed His message.”

A saint was asked about internal knowledge (*‘ilm al-bâtin*). He replied: “It is one of the secrets of Allâh ﷻ. He casts it in the hearts of His beloved ones. He does not inform any angel or human about it.”

Ka‘b al-Ahbâr ؓ said: “If people acquired an atom’s weight of conviction in the grandeur of Allâh ؓ, they would walk on water and wind. So glory to that Being who made the acknowledgement of one’s inability to truly recognize Him an intrinsic part of î mân just as He made a person’s acknowledgement of his inability to truly thank Allâh ؓ for His bounties upon him an intrinsic part of gratitude.”

Mahmûd al-Warrâq said:

إذا كان شكري نعمة الله نعمة - علي له في مثلها يجب الشكر
فكيف بلوغ الشكر إلا بفضل - وإن طالت الأيام واتصل العمر
إذا مس بالسراء عم سرورها - وإن مس بالضراء أعقبها الأجر
وما منهما إلا له فيه نعمة - تضيق له الأوهام والبر والبحر

“If my gratitude to Allâh for His bounties on me is a bounty in itself, then it is incumbent on me to express gratitude to Him. It is not possible to continue expressing gratitude except through His grace even though many days may pass and life may continue [for a long time]. When He blesses me with prosperity, the happiness thereof is all-pervading. When He afflicts me with a calamity, He follows it with reward. So both these [prosperity and calamity] are bounties from Him. Our thoughts, the earth and the sea are all insufficient to encompass this.”

When knowledge of the divinity of Allâh ؓ is established, acknowledgement of His worship is realized. When î mân is established in the heart, obedience to the Sustainer becomes incumbent. Î mân is of two types: external and internal. External î mân entails expressing it with the tongue. Internal î mân entails belief with the heart. The believers are at different distances in their level of proximity to Allâh ؓ and they differ in their levels of obedience. Î mân brings them together according to the share that each one is given. It also enables the person to gain high stages in devotion to Allâh ؓ, placing trust in Him and being pleased with His decree. Devotion entails a person not seeking any reward from the Creator

for what he does. Allâh ﷻ is the one who created you and whatever you do as well. Therefore, if obedience is out of hope for reward and fear of punishment, then such a person does not have perfect devotion. He actually did whatever he did for himself.

It is reported that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “You should not be like a bad dog that only does work when it fears. Nor should you be like a labourer who does not do any work when he is not given a wage.”

Allâh ﷻ says: “Among people is he who worships Allâh on the borderline: if prosperity reaches him, he remains steadfast on that worship [of Allâh]. But if adversity afflicts him, he turns about on his face. He loses both this world and the hereafter.”^[89] The worship of Allâh ﷻ is imposed on us and obedience to Him is incumbent upon us on account of His grace upon us and the good that He has done to us. This is in addition to the fact that He commanded us to worship and obey Him. In so doing, He rewards for obedience out of His grace, and He punishes for disobedience out of His justice.

As for *tawakkul*, it entails relying on Allâh ﷻ at the time of need, having confidence in Him at the time of necessity, placing one’s trust in Him at the time of an affliction – all this while the soul is at ease and the heart is at rest. So those who place their trust in Allâh ﷻ know that He is the one who destines, that the causes are under the command of the Creator, the Dispenser of affairs. They do not rely on parents, children, wealth, occupations, etc. Instead, they refer all their affairs to Him and they rely on no one but Him irrespective of what the situation may be. Whoever places his trust in Allâh ﷻ, He is sufficient for him.

As for being pleased with His decree, this entails the soul being satisfied with whatever He has destined. Some ‘ulamâ’ say: “The one who is closest to Allâh ﷻ is the one who is most pleased with what He has destined for him.” Some wise people said: “At times, happiness is the illness while illness is the cure.” A poet says:

كم نعمة مطوية - لك بين أنياب النوائب
ومسرة قد أقبلت - من حيث ترتقب المصائب
فاصبر على حدثان دهرك فالأمور لها عواقب
ولكل كرب فرجة - ولكل خالصة شوائب

“Many bounties are concealed for you within the jaws of calamities. Many an occasion of happiness comes to you from a place where you expect hardships. You should exercise patience over the incidents that take place in your life, for all matters have a consequence. For every difficulty there is ease and every untainted thing has a blemish.”

The words of Allâh ﷻ are sufficient for us: “Perhaps you dislike a thing while it is better for you.” [90]

You should know that a person can never perfect his obedience to his Sustainer except by discarding the world. Some of the wise sayings have the most eloquent admonitions as long as no cover conceals them from the heart. These covers are the attractions of this world. Some wise people say: “This world is just for an hour, so turn it into obedience.” Abû al-Walîd al-Bâî said:

إذا كنت أعلم علما يقينا - بأن جميع حياتي كساعة
فلم لا أكون ضنينا بها - وأجعلها في صلاح وطاعة

“If I know for sure that my entire life is like a single hour, why should I not be thrifty with it? And why should I not utilize it in goodness and obedience?”

A person said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: “I dislike death.” He asked: “Do you have any wealth?” He replied: “Yes.” He said: “Spend your wealth for a person is attached to his wealth.”

It is related that ‘Îsâ ﷺ said: “Piety is in three things: in speaking, in looking and in remaining silent. The person whose speech is not utilized in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ has in fact engaged in foolishness. The person whose sight is not utilized in taking admonition has in fact forgotten. The person whose silence is not utilized in pondering has in fact engaged in something useless.” Discarding the world entails discarding all thoughts about the conditions of the world and abstaining from desiring its enjoyments. This is because thoughts give birth to intention because the soul is attached to thoughts.

One should beware of looking at things that are not lawful. Because this is an arrow that gets its target and a power that overpowers a person. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The sight is one of the arrows of Satan. The person who abandons this out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ, He will replace it with îmân whose taste he will experience in his heart.”

A wise person said: “The person who gives free reign to his sight has many causes of sorrow. Excessive looking exposes things, disgraces man, and causes him to remain longer in the Hell-fire. Safeguard your eyes for if you give them a free reign, they will place you in difficulty. If you are able to control your eyes, you would have controlled your entire body.”

Plato was asked: “What is more harmful to the heart, the ears or the eyes?” He replied: “Both, the ears and the eyes, are like two wings for a bird. It cannot fly without both of them and it cannot climb up without the strength of both wings. If either one is cut, it will climb with the other with fatigue and difficulty.”

Muhammad ibn Daû’ said: “It is sufficient as a loss for a person in the sight of Allâh ﷻ and a disgrace in the sight of the intelligent that he looks at everything that presents itself before him.”


A pious man saw a man laughing at a boy. So he said to him: “O you whose intelligence and heart are wrecked! O you whose sight is wrecked! Are you not ashamed of the noble scribes [angels that are recording your deeds], and the angels that remember all deeds, that record everything you do, that

watch you all the time, who testify against your outward trials, your hidden and concealed deception in which you have stood like a person who does not bother about who is looking at him and who from the creation is watching him?”

Qâdî al-Arjânî says:

تمتعنا يا ناظرٍ بنظرة - فأوردنما قلبي أشد الموارد
أعيناي كفا عن فؤادي فإنه - من البغي سعى اثنين في قتل واحد

“O my eyes! You have enjoyed one glance but you have brought the most evil to my heart. O my eyes! Spare my heart for it is an injustice when two [eyes] get together to kill one [heart].”

‘Alî  said: “The eyes are the traps of Satan. The eye is the most effective part of the body in its speed and the most severe in fighting. The person who subjugates the parts of his body to his soul in the obedience of his Sustainer has in fact reached his goal. As for he who subjugates the parts of his body to his soul in fulfilling his desires has in fact destroyed his deeds.”

إذا ما صبغت نفس المرید لطاعة - ولما تشبها للمعاصي شوائب
وأتبعها فعل الجوارح كلها - فتلك عليه أنعم ومواهب
تلقت في دار الخلود كرامة - إذا جب للعاصي سنام وغارب

“When the soul of a *murîd* is inclined towards obedience and there is no resemblance of the blemishes of acts of disobedience, and he followed all this with actions of the other parts of his body – then these are all bounties and prizes that are showered upon him. He will receive honour in the eternal abode at a time when the hump and withers of a camel will be cut for a disobedient person.”

‘Abdullâh ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* said: “Îmân entails confirming all that the Messengers came with. He who confirms the Qur’ân will go out practising on it and will save himself from living for eternity in the Hell-fire. He who abstains from the unlawful shall go towards repentance. He

who takes his sustenance from his lawful earnings shall go towards piety. He who fulfils the obligatory duties, his Islam [submission to Allâh ﷻ] will be valid. He who speaks the truth will save himself from [evil] consequences. He who repulses injustices will save himself from retribution. He who practises on the Sunnah, his actions will be pure. He who is sincere to Allâh, his deeds will be accepted.”

It is narrated that Abû Dardâ’ ﷺ said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: “O Messenger of Allâh! Advise me.” He replied: “Earn that which is pure, do good deeds, ask Allâh ﷻ for sustenance of one day for one day, and consider yourself among the dead.”

One should beware of self-conceit in one’s actions. For this is one of the greatest calamities and it causes actions to fall. This is because the person who has this self-conceit is actually trying to show that he is doing a favour to his Sustainer. But does he know whether that action has been accepted or not? At times, an act of disobedience which causes disgrace and dejection is better than obedience which causes pride and haughtiness.

One should also beware of showing off. Allâh ﷻ says: “And there will appear before them, from Allâh, what they did not even imagine.” [91] It is said that they used to do deeds which they considered to be good deeds in this world. But on the day of resurrection, they were exposed to them as evil deeds. One of the pious people of the past used to recite this verse and say: “Destruction to those who do things in order to show off.” The following is also explained with regard to this verse: “and should not ascribe anyone as a partner in the worship of his Sustainer.” [92] In other words, he should not display his acts of worship in order to show off, nor should he conceal them out of bashfulness.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Mas’ûd ﷺ that the last verse to be revealed of the Qur’ân was this verse: “Fear the day in which you will be returned to Allâh. Then every soul shall be given in full whatever it earned. And they will not be wronged.” [93]

Muhammad ibn Bashîr says:

مضى أمسك الأذى شهيدا معدلا - ويومك هذا بالفعال شهيد

فإن تلك بالأمس اقترفت إساءة - فثن بإحسان وأنت حميد

ولا ترج فعل الخير منك إلى غد - لعل غدا يأتي وأنت فقيد

“Just yesterday passed as a just witness [to you or against you]. And this day of yours is also a witness to your actions. So if you committed any wrong yesterday, follow it [today] with a good deed so that you may be praised. Do not hope of doing good tomorrow [do not procrastinate in doing good] for it is possible that tomorrow will come but you would have passed away.”

Another poet says:

تعجل الذنب بما تشتهي - وتأمل التوبة في قابل

والموت يأتي بعد ذا غفلة - ما ذاك فعل الحازم العاقل

“You hasten in committing whatever sin you like. Yet you hope to repent later, while death comes without your being aware of it. This is not the way of a person of resolve and intelligence.”

Dâ'ûd عليه السلام said to Sulaymân عليه السلام: “The piety of a believer can be gauged through three things: (1) To have complete trust in Allâh عز وجل in what he has not achieved. (2) To be completely pleased with Allâh in what he achieved. (3) To be completely patient over what he missed.”

There is a famous saying that the person who exercises patience over a calamity will reach the stage of loyalty. A poet says:

عليك بالصبر إن نابتك نائبة - من الزمان ولا تركز إلى الجزع

وإن تعرضت الدنيا بزيتها - فالصبر عنها دليل الخير والورع

فجاهد النفس قسرا فيهما أبدا - تلق الذي ترجيه غير ممتنع

“Remain patient if any calamity afflicts you at any time, and do not become vexed. If the world presents itself before you with its beauty, remaining patient [turning away from it] is a proof of goodness and piety. Always fight your soul with full force concerning both these things. In so doing, you will receive whatever you hope for, without it being refused to you.”

Another poet says:

الصبر مفتاح ما يرجى - ولم يزل دائما يعين
فاصبر وإن طالت الليالي - فرما ساعد الحزون
ورما نيل باضطبار - ما قيل هيهات لا يكون

“Patience is the key to whatever is hoped for, and it always comes to one’s assistance. Remain patient, then, even if it is for a long time. At times it helps in removing worries and at times you acquire what you want through patience. It will not have to be said, ‘If only that did not happen.’”

Another poet says:

الصبر أوثق عروة الإيمان - ومحنة من نزغة الشيطان
الصبر فيه عواقب محمود - والطيش فيه عواقب الخسران
فإذا لقيت من الزمان ملمة - وكذاك فينا عادة الأزمان
فتدرج الصبر الجميل تيقناً - إن التصبر رائد الرضوان

“Patience is the tightest knot of îmân and it is a shield from the incitement of Satan. Patience entails good consequences while recklessness causes destructive consequences. So if you experience any calamity at any time – and that is what time normally does to us – then equip yourself with good patience with full conviction. Surely patience is a quality that brings on the pleasure [of Allâh ﷻ].”

There are different types of patience. Patience in fulfilling the compulsory injunctions – by fulfilling them with constancy, with perfection and at the

times that are most meritorious. Patience in fulfilling optional acts. Patience on the harms imposed by companions and neighbours. Patience on illnesses. Patience on poverty. Patience on sins, desires, doubtful things, and excesses of all parts of the body, and other types as well.

ON REMEMBERING DEATH

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Engage in excessive remembrance of the destroyer of all pleasures.” This means that you should make pleasures feel loathsome by remembering death to such an extent that your inclination towards them is severed and you turn your attention to Allâh ﷻ.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If the animals knew about death what humans know about it, you would not eat any of them that are fat.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Will anyone be raised with the martyrs?” He replied: “Yes. The person who remembers death 20 times a day.” The reason behind all these merits is that remembrance of death compels a person to remain aloof from the world of deception and demands that he prepares for the hereafter. Being unmindful of death propels a person to be totally engrossed in the pleasures of this world.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Death is the gift of the believer.” The reason why he said this is that the world is a prison of the believer. As long as he is in this world, he is in constant stress in enduring his soul, pacifying his desires and repulsing his Satan. Death thus frees him from this torment. This freedom is therefore a gift in his favour.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Death is an atonement for every Muslim.” In saying this, he is referring to a true Muslim and a firm believer from whose verbal and physical harms other Muslims are safe, in whom the true characteristics of a believer are found, who is not tainted by acts of disobedience except minor sins. Death thus purifies him from them [minor sins] and expiates them after he abstains from major sins and fulfils the compulsory duties.

‘Atâ’ al-Khurâsânî *rahimahullâh* said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by an assembly in which there was loud laughter. So he said: ‘Mix and

blend your assembly with the remembrance of that which contaminates all pleasures.’ They asked: ‘What is it that contaminates all pleasures?’ He replied: ‘Death.’”

Anas رضي الله عنه said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘Remember death excessively for it purifies sins and causes one to abstain from this world.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Death is sufficient as a separator.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Death is sufficient as an admonisher.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went out towards the masjid when he saw some people talking and laughing. He said to them: “Remember death. Listen! I take an oath in the name of that Being in whose control is my life, if you only knew what I know, you would laugh little and cry a lot.”

Someone mentioned a person in the presence of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and the people began speaking highly of this person. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then asked: “What is the extent of your friend’s remembrance of death?” They replied: “We do not hear him talking of death at all.” He said: “Your friend is not what you are saying.” [In other words, he does not deserve the praises you are showering on him.]

Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “I was one of a group of ten people who went to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. A person from the Ansâr asked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Who is the most intelligent and most honourable of people?’ He replied: ‘The person who remembers death the most and the one who makes the most preparation for it. Such people are the intelligent ones. They have amassed the admiration of this world and the honour of the hereafter.’”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “Death has disgraced this world and has therefore left no joy for the person of intelligence.” Ar-Rabî‘ ibn Khaytham *rahimahullâh* said: “There isn’t any unseen thing which a believer waits for that is better for him than death.” He also used to say: “Do not allow anyone to become aware of me, and enable me to slink away to my Sustainer without anyone coming to know of it.”

A wise man wrote to one of his friends: “O my brother! Be cautious of death in this abode before you go to an abode wherein you will desire and hope for death but you will not find it.” When death used to be mentioned before Ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh*, every limb of his body would become dead. It was the habit of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* to gather all the jurists every night. They would then talk about death, the resurrection and the hereafter. They would then begin crying to such an extent that it was as though there was a corpse before them.


Ibrâhîm at-Taymîy *rahimahullâh* said: “Two things have cut off the pleasure of this world from me: remembrance of death and standing before Allâh ﷻ.”

Ka‘b *rahimahullâh* said: “When a person recognizes death, the calamities and worries of this world become insignificant to him.”

Mutarrif *rahimahullâh* said: “I saw in a dream that a person was standing in the centre of the musjid of Basra and saying: ‘The remembrance of death has cut the hearts of the fearful ones. By Allâh, you only see them grief-stricken.’”

Ash‘ath *rahimahullâh* said: “We used to visit al-Hasan [al-Basrî*rahimahullâh*]. He only used to talk about the Hell-fire, the affairs of the hereafter and the remembrance of death.”

Safîyyah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “A woman complained to ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* about her hard-heartedness. ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said to her: ‘Remember death excessively and your heart will become soft.’ The woman did this and experienced her heart softening. She then came to thank ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*.”

When Dâ’ûd  used to remember death and the resurrection, he would cry to such an extent that his limbs would become dislocated. And when he remembered the mercy [of Allâh ﷻ], his soul would return to him.

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “I have not come across an intelligent person who was not cautious of death and not grief-stricken by it.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* said to one of the ‘ulamâ’: “Advise me.” He replied: “You are the first caliph to die.” He said to him: “Advise me more.” He said: “There is no one from your forefathers right up to Âdam who has not tasted death. And your turn has now come.” On hearing this, ‘Umar *rahimahullâh* began crying.

Ar-Rabî‘ ibn Khaytham *rahimahullâh* dug a grave in his house. He would sleep in it several times every day in order to continue remembering death. He used to say: “If the remembrance of death left my heart for a single moment, it will be destroyed.”

Mutarriif ibn ‘Abdillâh ibn ash-Shakhîr *rahimahullâh* said: “Surely this death has spoilt the pleasures of those who are engrossed in pleasures. You should therefore seek a pleasure in which there is no death.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* said to ‘Anbasah: “Remember death excessively. Surely if you are experiencing affluence in life, remembrance of death will constrict it. And if you are experiencing constriction in life, remembrance of death will expand it.”

Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî *rahimahullâh* said to the mother of Hârûn: “Do you love death?” She replied: “No.” He asked her: “Why?” She replied: “If I were to disobey a fellow human, I would not want to meet him. Now how can I want to meet Allâh ﷻ when I disobeyed Him?”

Abû Mûsâ at-Tamîmîy *rahimahullâh* said: “The wife of al-Farazdaq passed away. Many great personalities of Basra attended her funeral. Among them was al-Hasan [al-Basrî *rahimahullâh*]. Al-Hasan said: ‘O Abû Firâs! What did you prepare for this day?’ He replied: ‘Testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, for the last 60 years.’ When she was buried, al-Farazdaq stood at her grave and said:

أُخاف وراء القبر إن لم تعافني - أشد من القبر التهاها وأضيحا
إذا جاءني يوم القيامة قائد - عنيف وسَّاق يسوق الفرزدا
لقد خاب من أولاد آدم من مشى - إلى النار مغلول القلادة أزرقا

“If You [Allâh] do not pardon me, then I fear something far more blazing and constricting than the grave [i.e. the Hell-fire]. This will happen on the day of resurrection when a stern and strict guard will come to me and herd al-Farazdaq [to the Hell-fire]. The person from the progeny of Âdam who walks towards the Hell-fire fettered in chains and blind has certainly suffered a great loss.”

The following is said with regard to the dwellers of the graves:

قف بالقبور وقل على ساحاتها - من منكم المغمور في ظلماتها
ومن المكرم منكم في قعرها - قد ذاق برد الأمن من روعاتها
أما السكون لذي العيون فواحد - لا يستبين الفضل في درجاتها
لو جاوبوك لأخبروك بالسن - تصف الحقائق بعد من حالاتها
أما المطيع فنازل في روضة - يفضي إلى ما شاء من دوحاتها
والجرم الطاغى بها متقلب - في حفرة يأوي إلى حياتها
وعقارب تسعى إليه فروحه - في شدة التعذيب من لدغاتها

“Stand by the graves and proclaim before their open spaces: ‘Who from among you is submerged in its darkness? Who from among you is honoured in its pit, having tasted the coolness of peace from its terrors? As for tranquillity for those who have eyes, this is one. Virtue and merit cannot be distinguished in the stages of the graves. If they [dwellers of the graves] were to answer you, they would have informed you with replies describing the realities of the conditions of the graves. As for the obedient person, he goes down into a garden, reaching any of its tall trees which he likes. As for the transgressing criminal, he twists and turns in a pit seeking refuge by its

serpents, and scorpions hasten towards him. His soul thus experiences the severity of punishment from their stings and bites.”

Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* says: “I passed by a graveyard, so I began saying:

أتيت القبور فناديتها – فأين المعظم والمختقر
وأين المدلل بسلطانه – وأين المزكي إذا ما افتخر

“I came to the graves and proclaimed to them: ‘Where is that person who considers himself to be very great and the one who looks down on others? Where is that person who is conceited by his authority? Where is that self-righteous person when he vexes in his pride?’”

Mâlid ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* says: “I heard the following reply from the graves. I could hear a voice but could not see anyone. He was saying:

تفانوا جميعا فما مخبر – وماتوا جميعا ومات الخبر
تروح وتغلوا بنات الثرى – فتمحوا محاسن تلك الصور
فيا سائلي من أناس مضوا – أمالك فيما ترى معتبر

“They have all been destroyed. There is therefore no one to give any reply. They have all died and information about them has also died. The children of the soil come and go in the morning and evening and they obliterate the beauty that is on those faces. So O you who are asking me about people who have passed away! Isn’t there an admonition for you in what you see?”

The following was written on a grave:

تناجيك أجدات وهن صموت – وسكانها تحت التراب خفوت
أيا جامع الدنيا لغير بلاغة – لمن تجمع الدنيا وأنت تموت

“The graves are speaking to you despite being silent. Their inhabitants beneath the ground are quiet and still. O you who are amassing the world

for no purpose! For whom are you gathering this world when you are certainly going to die?”

Ibn Simâk *rahimahullâh* said: “I passed some graves and found the following written on one grave:

يمر أقاري جنبات قبري - كأن أقاري لم يعرفوني
ذوو الميراث يقتسمون مالي - وما يألون إن جحدوا ديوني
قد أخذوا سهامهم وعاشوا - فيالله أسرع ما نسوني

“My relatives pass by my grave as though they do not know me. The inheritors are distributing my wealth. They are not even bothered when they refuse to pay my debts. They have taken their shares and are enjoying themselves. By Allâh! How quickly they have forgotten me!?”

The following was written on a grave:

إن الحبيب من الأحباب مختلس - لا يمنع الموت بواب ولا حرس
فكيف تفرح بالدنيا ولذتها - يا من يعد عليه اللفظ والنفس
أصبحت يا غافلا في النقص منغمسا - وأنت دهرك في اللذات منغمس
لا يرحم الموت ذا جهل لغرته - ولا الذي كان منه العلم يقتبس
كم أخرس الموت في قبر وقفت به - عن الجواب لسانا ما به خرس
قد كان قصرك معمورا له شرف - فقبرك اليوم في الأجداث مندرس

“There are from among one’s beloved ones, he who is an embezzler. Neither a guard nor a sentry can stop death. How, then, can you rejoice with this world and its pleasures?! O he whose every word and every breath is taken to count! You have become neglectful, engrossed in shortcomings. You are engrossed in pleasures your entire life. Death does not show mercy to the ignorant for his heedlessness. Nor does it show mercy to the person from whom knowledge was sought. How many people death reduced to silence at a grave by which you stood! Death silenced the tongue from

answering despite it not being dumb. Your palace was fully inhabited and it enjoyed great honour. Today your grave is obliterated among other graves.”

The following was written on a grave:

وقفت على الأحبة حين صفت - قبورهم كأفراس الرهان
فلئن بكيت وفاض دمعي - رأت عيناى بينهم مكانى

“I stood by my beloved ones when I visited their graves which were laid out like betted horses. When I cried and my tears flowed, my eyes saw my place [of burial] among them.”

The following was written on the grave of a doctor:

قد قلت لما قال لي قائل - قد صار لقمان إلى رسمه
فأين من يوصف من طبه - وحذقه في الماء مع جسسه
هيهات لا يدفع عن غيره - من كان لا يدفع عن نفسه

“When someone informed me that Luqmân has reached his grave, I said: ‘Where is that person who was well known for his medical expertise and his mastery in water with his examining [and checking the pulse of patients]!? It is impossible for that person who could not repulse [death] from him self to repulse it from others.’”

The following was written on a grave:

يا أيها الناس كان لي أمل - قصر بي عن بلوغه الأجل
فليتق الله ربه رجل - أمكنه في حياته العمل
ما أنا وحدي نقلت حيث ترى - كل إلى مثله سيتقل

“O people! I had a hope. The expiry of my time did not permit me to realize that hope. A person should therefore fear Allâh, his Sustainer, since He has enabled him to do deeds in his life. I am not the only one who has reached

this place which you see [i.e. this grave]. Every single person will reach a place similar to this.”

ON THE HEAVENS AND VARIOUS CREATIONS

It is related that the first thing that Allâh ﷻ created was a jewel. He then looked at it with a stern look. It therefore melted and trembled out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ. It then became water. He then looked at it with a look of mercy and so half of it became solid. From this half He created the Throne. The Throne trembled. So Allâh ﷻ wrote on it:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

“There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh.”

[When Allâh ﷻ wrote this], the Throne became tranquil. Allâh ﷻ left the water as it was – trembling till the day of resurrection. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ

“And His throne was on water.” (Sûrah Hûd, 11: 7)

The water then began crushing into each other and making waves. Vapours began rising from it and these vapours began piling on each other. This water also contained foam. Allâh ﷻ then created the skies and the earth from it comprising different levels. The earth and skies were moulded into each other. Allâh ﷻ then created air within them thereby separating the levels of the skies and the levels of the earth. Allâh ﷻ says:

ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ

“He then ascended the sky while it was smoke.” (Sûrah Fussilat, 41: 11)

The sages say that Allâh ﷻ created the skies from smoke and not from steam because smoke is created in inter-joined parts whereby its end remains intact. On the other hand, steam falls back and retreats. This shows the perfect knowledge and wisdom of Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ then looked at the water with mercy and it became solid as mentioned in the Hadîth.

The distance between the lowest heaven (*samâ' ad-dunyâ*) and earth, and likewise between every heaven is the distance of 500 years. Each heaven is likewise dense. It is said that the first heaven is whiter than milk and it became green on account of the greenness on a mountain. The name of this heaven is *Raqî'ah*. The second heaven is made of steel. It glitters with light and its name is *Faydûm* or *Mâ'ûn*. The third heaven is made of copper. Its name is *Malakût* or *Hâriyûn*. The fourth heaven is made of white silver. It is so bright that its light can almost snatch away the eyes. Its name is *az-Zâhirah*. The fifth heaven is made of red gold. Its name is *al-Muzayyinah* or *al-Mushirah*. The sixth heaven is made of jewels which glitter with light. Its name is *al-Khâlisah*. The seventh heaven is made of rubies. Its name is *al-Lâbiyah* or *ad-Dâmi'ah*. In this heaven is *al-Bayt al-Ma'mûr* which has four pillars: one pillar is of rubies, one is of green chrysolite, one is of white silver, and one is of red gold. It is related that 70 000 angels enter *al-Bayt al-Ma'mûr* each day never to return there again till the day of resurrection.

The reliable opinion is that the earth is superior to the heavens because the Prophets were created out of earth and were buried in it. The most superior levels of earth is the uppermost level for the very reason mentioned [i.e. because the Prophets were created out of earth and were buried in it] and also because it is the level from which the world can benefit.

It is related from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that the most superior of the heavens is the one whose roof is just below the Throne of the Merciful, and that is the *Kursî*. This is because it is very close to the Throne and because all the planets from which benefit is taken are firmly established therein, except for the seven moving planets. These seven are in the seven heavens. They are: *Zuhal* (Saturn) which is in the seventh heaven and it is for Saturday, *al-Mushtarî* (Jupiter) which is in the sixth heaven and it is for Thursday, *al-Mirrîkh* (Mars) which is in the fifth heaven and it is for Tuesday, *ash-Shams* (Sun) which is in the fourth heaven and it is for Sunday, *az-Zuharah*

(Venus) which is in the third heaven and it is for Friday, *‘Utârid* (Mercury) which is in the second heaven and it is for Wednesday, and *al-Qamar* (Moon) which is in the first heaven and it is for Monday.

From among the astonishing creation of Allâh ﷻ is that He created the seven heavens from smoke and yet each one of them does not resemble the other. And He sends down rain from the heavens and produces through it various types of vegetation and fruits of different colours and tastes. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَنُفَضِّلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي الْأُكْلِ

“It is We who make one excel over the other in the fruit.” (Sûrah ar-Rad, 13: 4)

Allâh ﷻ first created Âdam ﷺ [and his progeny] with various qualities: there are those who are white, those who are black, those who are happy, those who are sad, those who are believers, those who are unbelievers, those who are knowledgeable, those who are ignorant – all this, despite the fact that the original was one Âdam ﷺ. Glory to the One who mastered everything that He created.

ON THE KURSÎ, ‘ARSH, THE CLOSE ANGELS, SUSTENANCE AND TAWAKKUL

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَبِيعْ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ

“His *Kursî* extends over the heavens and the earth.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 255)

It is said that His *Kursî* is symbolic of His knowledge. Some say that it is symbolic of His kingdom. Others say that it refers to a certain celestial body.

It is related from ‘Alî ؑ that the *Kursî* is of pearls, and its height is known to Allâh ﷻ alone. It is stated in a Tradition that the seven heavens and the seven earths together with the *Kursî* are all like a small chain link in a huge field. Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the heavens are in the midst of the *Kursî* while the *Kursî* is in front of the ‘*Arsh*.

On the authority of ‘Ikramah *rahimahullâh* who said: “The sun is a single part of 70 parts of the light of the *Kursî*. And the ‘*Arsh* is a single part of 70 parts of the light of the veils.” It is related that there are 70 veils of darkness and 70 veils of light between the bearers of the ‘*Arsh* and the bearers of the *Kursî*. The distance between each veil is a journey of 500 years. Were it not for this great distance, the bearers of the *Kursî* would have got burnt by the light of these veils.

The ‘*Arsh* is a lofty luminous body which is above the *Kursî*. It is thus different from the *Kursî*. Contrary to what al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* says. It is said that it is made of rubies. Others say that it is made of green jewels. Others say that it is made of white pearls. Yet others say that it is made of light. It is preferable not to describe its essence with certainty.

Astronomers refer to it as the ninth planet, the highest planet, the planet of planets, and the planet that is devoid of any stars. All that the previous astronomers said in this regard is applicable to the eighth planet which they refer to as the planet of the zodiac and which the people of the Sharî‘ah [scholars of Islam] refer to as the *Kursî*. The ‘*Arsh* is the roof of all the creations. Therefore nothing can leave its bounds. It is the limit of the knowledge of the servants. There is no possibility of perceiving anything beyond it and no person can seek anything beyond it. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ
عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

“If they still turn away, then say: ‘Allâh is sufficient for me. None is worthy of worship beside Him. It is in Him that I have placed my trust, and He alone is the master of the mighty ‘*Arsh* (throne).’ (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 129)

Allâh ﷻ describes the ‘*Arsh* as being “mighty” because it is the mightiest of all the creation. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ proved himself with the quality of *tawakkul* (placing one’s trust in Allâh ﷻ alone) as ordered in this verse. It is for this reason that the Taurâh and other divine Books refer to him as *al-Mutawakkil* (the person who placed his full trust in Allâh ﷻ). How could this quality not be found in him since *tawakkul* is a branch of *tauhîd* and *ma‘rifah* (true recognition of Allâh ﷻ)?! And the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the leader of all monotheists (*muwahhidîn*) and the head of all those who truly recognized Allâh ﷻ (i.e. the ‘*ârifîn*).

Tawakkul does not negate resorting to means as is sometimes misunderstood. Rather, resorting to and adopting the means is also commanded. A Bedouin asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: “Should I tie my camel or should I leave it and place my trust in Allâh?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: “Tie it and place your trust in Allâh.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ also said: “If you were to place your full trust in Allâh, He will provide sustenance to you as He provides sustenance to a

bird: it leaves hungry in the morning and returns full in the evening.” The mere fact that the bird leaves [its nest] in the morning is an indication that it adopts the means for the acquisition of its sustenance.

Ibrâhîm ibn Adham *rahimahullâh* and Shaqîq al-Balkhî *rahimahullâh* met in Makkah. Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* said to Shaqîq *rahimahullâh*: “How did you reach such a lofty position?” He replied: “I passed by a waterless desert and I saw a bird with broken wings.” So I said to my self: ‘I am going to see from where this bird is given provision?’ So I sat near it and watched. I then saw a bird coming with a locust in its beak. It placed this locust in the mouth of this bird whose wings were broken. So I said to my self: ‘Surely the being who sent this bird to this [injured] bird is able to provide for me where ever I may be. I therefore gave up going out to earn and occupied my self in the worship of Allâh ﷻ.’” Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* said: “Why don’t you become like the healthy bird which fed the sick bird so that you may be superior to it? Have you not heard the Prophet ﷺ saying: ‘The giving hand is better than the receiving hand.’? And it is the mark of a true believer to seek the better of the two positions in all his affairs so that he may reach the rank of the righteous.” [On hearing this], Shaqîq *rahimahullâh* took the hand of Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh*, kissed it and said to him: “You are our *ustâdh* (senior teacher), O Abû Ishâq!”

When a person seeks the means, he should do his utmost not to look at his means nor to confine himself to them. Rather, he should make his Master [Allâh ﷻ] the object of his sight and his sole objective. Like a beggar going to the people begging with a bowl in his hand. He does not look at his bowl but looks only at those who are giving him. A Hadîth states: “The person who wishes to be the richest of people should place more trust in what Allâh ﷻ has than what he has in his own hands.”

Hudhayfah al-Mar‘ashî *rahimahullâh* was in the service of Ibrâhîm ibn Adham *rahimahullâh*. Hudhayfah *rahimahullâh* was asked: “What is the best thing you saw about him?” He replied: “We remained for several days on the road to Makkah without have no food whatsoever with us. We eventually entered Kufah and resorted to a dilapidated masjid. Ibrâhîm looked at me and said: ‘O Hudhayfah! I see that you are hungry.’ I replied:

‘I am as my shaykh sees [in other words, yes, I am hungry].’ He said: ‘Bring me a pen and paper.’ I brought these to him. After writing *Bismillâh* (In the name of Allâh), he wrote: ‘You are the object under every condition and situation. And You are the one who is referred to with every meaning.’ He then wrote the following:

أنا حامد أنا شاكر أنا ذاكر – أنا جائع أنا ضائع أنا عاري
هي ستة وأنا الضمين لنصفها – فكن الضمين لنصفها يا باري
مدحي لغيرك هب نار خضتها – فأجر عبيدك من دخول النار

“I praise [You, O Allâh!]. I thank [You, O Allâh!]. I remember [You, O Allâh!]. I am hungry. I am lost. I have no clothes. These are six qualities. I am responsible for half of them [i.e. praising, thanking and remembering You]. So You take the responsibility for the other half, O my Creator! If I were to praise [and thank] anyone apart from You, it would entail my going into the blazing fire. So save Your servant from entering the fire.”

“He then gave me this piece of paper and said to me: ‘Go and do not attach your heart with anyone apart from Allâh ﷻ. Give this piece of paper to the first person who meets you.’ I left and the first person who met me was a man on a donkey. I gave him the piece of paper. He took it. When he looked at what was written, he began crying and asked: ‘What has happened to the person who wrote this?’ I replied: ‘He is in such and such musjid.’ He then gave me a money-bag in which there were 600 dinars. I then met another person and inquired from him about the man on the donkey. He replied: ‘He is a Christian.’ I went to Ibrâhîm and related the story to him. He said to me: ‘Do not touch that money for he will come within an hour.’ After an hour, the Christian came, lowered himself to kiss the head of Ibrâhîm, and embraced Islam.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “When Allâh ﷻ created the bearers of the ‘*Arsh*, He said to them: ‘Carry My ‘*Arsh*.’ But they were unable to carry it. So Allâh ﷻ created the equivalent number of angels that are in the seven heavens for each of the bearers. He then said to them: ‘Carry My ‘*Arsh*.’ But they were unable to carry it. So Allâh ﷻ created the equivalent number of angels

that are in the heavens and the number of creations that are on earth for each of the bearers. He then said to them: ‘Carry My ‘*Arsh*.’ But they were unable to carry it. So He said to them: ‘Say: ‘There is no might and no power except from Allâh.’ When they said this, they carried it. But their feet pierced through the seven earths on the back of the wind. When they realized that their feet are not settling on anything [solid], they held on to the ‘*Arsh* while continuously saying: ‘There is no might and no power except from Allâh.’ This they did out of fear that one of them may be overturned and it will not be known where he has fallen. They are thus bearing the ‘*Arsh* and it is bearing them. And both are carried by the power of Allâh ﷻ.

It is related that the person who says the following supplication seven times in the morning and evening, Allâh ﷻ will suffice him for all that concerns him irrespective of whether he is true in what he is saying or not. Another narration states that Allâh ﷻ will suffice him for all his concerns about the hereafter and this world. The supplication is:

حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

“Allâh is sufficient for me. There is none worthy of worship except Him. It is in Him that I have placed my trust. He is the Lord of the mighty throne (‘*Arsh*).”

ON ABSTAINING FROM THE WORLD AND ITS DISPRAISE

There are numerous verses dispraising the world. Most of the verses of the Qur'ân comprise of dispraising the world, turning the creation away from it and calling the creation towards the hereafter. In fact, this was the objective of the Prophets ﷺ and they were sent solely for this purpose. There is no need to provide Qur'ânic verses as proofs for they are so obvious. We will rather quote a few Traditions in this regard.




It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by a dead goat, and so he said: "Do you'll see how insignificant this goat is to its owners?" The Companions replied: "It is because of its insignificance that they threw it away." The Messenger ﷺ said: "I take an oath in the name of that Being in whose control is my life, the world is more insignificant in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than this goat is to its owners. If this world was equal to the value of the wing of fly in the sight of Allâh ﷻ, He would not have provided even a sip of water to the unbeliever."


The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The world is the prison of the believer and the Paradise of the unbeliever."


The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The world is cursed and all that is in it is cursed except that which is for Allâh."


Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî رضي الله عنه said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The person who loves his world will do so to the detriment of his hereafter. The person who loves his hereafter will do so to the detriment of his hereafter. You should therefore give preference to that which is eternal over that which is temporary."



The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Love of this world is the basis of every evil."

Zayd ibn Arqam  said: “We were with Abû Bakr  when he asked for a drink. Water and honey was brought to him. When he brought this close to his mouth, he began crying and caused his companions to cry as well. They then kept quiet but he continued crying. He then repeated this and began crying to the extent that they thought that they will not be able to ask him. He then wiped his eyes. They asked him: ‘O deputy of the Messenger of Allâh! What has caused you to cry?’ He replied: ‘I was with the Messenger of Allâh  and I saw him repulsing something from himself. But I did not see anyone with him. So I asked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! What are you repulsing from your self?’ He replied: ‘It is this world that has come to me in a physical form. So I said to it: ‘Get away from me.’ It went back and said: ‘You may have escaped me but those who are after you will not escape me.’”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “It is most astonishing that a person truly believes in the eternal abode but still strives for this abode of deception.”

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh  stood on a garbage dump and said: “Come to this world!” He then picked up a rag that had become tattered and a bone that became decomposed, and said: “This is the world!” He was referring to the fact that the splendour of this world will become tattered like that rag and that all these physical bodies that are seen in this world will be turned into decomposed bones.

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “The world is sweet and green. Allâh will send you therein and then see what deeds you do. When the world was opened to the Banî Isrâ’îl and laid out before them, they became engrossed in jewellery, women, perfumes and clothes.”

‘Îsâ  said: “Do not adopt the world as a lord or else it will adopt you as slaves. Store your treasures by him who will not squander it. There is no guarantee that the person who stores the treasures of this world is not going to be afflicted by a calamity. As for the person who stores the treasures of Allâh, there is no fear of his being afflicted by calamity.” He also said: “O group of disciples! I have flung the world on its face for you. Therefore do not revive it after me. Surely one of the evils of this world is that Allâh 

is disobeyed in it. Another evil of this world is that the hereafter is only realized [and valued] after leaving this world. Listen, use the world merely as a place of crossing over and do not inhabit it [as though you are going to live in it forever]. You should know that the basis for every sin is love for this world. Many a time, fulfilling a desire for a single moment has caused a very lengthy grief.” He also said: “The world has lowered its self before you and you have sat on its back. So do not allow the kings and women to compete with you in it. And you too should not compete with them in it. They will not approach you as long as you abandon them and their world. As for women, you should safeguard yourselves from them through fasting and *salâh*.” He also said: “The world seeks and is also sought. The person who seeks the hereafter is sought by this world till his sustenance is given in full for him. As for the person who seeks this world, he is sought by the hereafter till death comes to him and grasps him by his neck.”

Mûsâ ibn Yasâr narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allâh did not create any creation that is more abhorred in His sight than this world. And He has not looked at it ever since He created it.”

It is related that Sulaymân ibn Dâ’ûd عليه السلام was moving in his procession with the birds shading him, and the jinn and humans to his right and left. He passed by a worshipper (*‘âbid*) from the Banî Isrâ’îl. The latter said to him: “By Allâh! O son of Dâ’ûd! Allâh has certainly given you a very grand kingdom.” When Sulaymân عليه السلام heard this, he replied: “A single *tasbîh* (glorification of Allâh ﷻ by saying *subhânallâh*) recorded in the book of deeds of a believer is far better than [this mighty kingdom] that the son of Dâ’ûd عليه السلام has been given. The reason is that all that the son of Dâ’ûd عليه السلام has been given is going to come to an end. As for the single *tasbîh*, it will remain forever.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The desire for hoarding more and more has deceived you. The son of Âdam says: ‘My wealth, my wealth. And what wealth do you have except the following: (1) the food which you ate and digested, (2) the clothes which you wore and wore out, (3) the wealth that you gave in charity and stored its reward?’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The world is a home for the person who has no home, wealth for the person who has no wealth, the person who has no intelligence hoards for this world, the person who has no knowledge fights for it, the person who has no understanding becomes jealous because of it, the person who has no conviction strives for it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who gets up in the morning with the world being his greatest concern, then he has nothing from Allâh ﷻ. [In addition to this], Allâh ﷻ imposes four characteristics onto him: (1) worry that never ever leaves him, (2) preoccupation [with activities] which he is never able to complete, (3) poverty from which he is never able to come out, (4) hopes which he is never able to accomplish.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to me: ‘O Abû Hurayrah! Should I not show you the entire world with all that it contains?’ I replied: ‘Certainly, O Messenger of Allâh!’ He then held me by my hand and took me to one of the valleys of Madînah. There was a garbage dump there with heads of people, rubbish, tattered rags, and bones. He then said: ‘O Abû Hurayrah! All these heads had desires like you’ll and hopes like you’ll, now today they are bones without any flesh. And they will soon turn to ashes. All this rubbish and garbage are the various foods which you earned from various places. You then cast these foods into your bellies. Now that this food has turned to excreta, you are all trying to stay far from it and protecting yourself from it. All these tattered rags were the attires and clothes of the people. They have now been reduced to such a state that the winds flap them around. These bones are the bones of their animals. They used to take these animals to pasture in the different pasture lands. So whoever wishes to cry over this world, let him continue crying.’ Abû Hurayrah ؓ said: “We did not return till we cried profusely.”

It is related that when Allâh ﷻ sent Âdam ؑ down to earth, He said: “He has a son that is bound to destruction and a progeny that is bound to annihilation.”

Dâ’ûd ibn Hilâl *rahimahullâh* said: “The following is written in the Scripture of Ibrâhîm ؑ: ‘O world! You are so insignificant in the eyes of

the righteous, before whom you have beautified and adorned yourself! I have cast abhorrence for you in their hearts, and turning away from you. I have not created any creation that is more insignificant in My sight than you. Every matter concerning you is inconsequential and bound to annihilation. From the very day that I created you, I decreed that you will not remain forever for anyone nor will anyone remain forever for you even if the person who is attached to you is extremely miserly concerning you and is extremely desirous of you. Glad tidings to the righteous who look to Me from their hearts with pleasure, and look at Me from the depths of their hearts with truth and steadfastness. Glad tidings to them! When they come to Me from their graves, they shall certainly enjoy the grand reward of light in front of them with the angels surrounding them till I convey them to whatever they desire of My mercy.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The world is placed between the sky and the earth ever since Allâh ﷻ created it. He has never looked at it ever since. On the day of resurrection it will say to Allâh: ‘O Allâh! Give me as a share to one of Your lowest of friends (*auliyâ*).’ Allâh ﷻ will reply: ‘Keep silent, O you who are nothing! I did not want you for them in the world, do you think that I will now want you for them today?!’”

It is related with regard to Âdam عليه السلام that when he ate of the forbidden tree, his stomach began quivering in order to remove the weight that was in it. This had never happened with any of the other foods of Paradise. It only happened with this tree. It was for this reason that they [Âdam عليه السلام and Hawwâ’ عليه السلام] were prohibited from eating from this tree. [When he experienced this quivering in his stomach], he began walking around in Paradise. Allâh ﷻ ordered an angel to address him and ask him: “What do you want?” Âdam عليه السلام replied: “I want to remove whatever discomfort there is in my stomach.” Allâh ﷻ asked the angel to ask him: “Where do you want this discomfort to be removed – on the carpets, on the beds, on the rivers or in the shade of trees? Do you see any place that is suitable for what you want to do? Go down into the world [there is no place in Paradise for what you want to do].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection there will come such people whose actions will be like the mountains of Tihâmah. They will be ordered to go into the Hell-fire.” The Companions asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Are they the ones who used to offer salâh?” He replied: “Yes. They used to offersalâh, keep fast and take something of the night [spend it in worship]. And when anything of this world was presented before them, they would leap towards it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said in one of his sermons: “The believer is between two fears: the life that has passed without his knowing what Allâh is going to do about it, the life that is to come without his knowing what Allâh has decreed therein for him. The true servant should therefore prepare from his soul for his self, from his world for his hereafter, from his life for his death, and from his youth for his old age. This is because the world was created for you, but you are created for the hereafter. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, there isn’t anything more burdensome after death, and there isn’t any abode after this world except Paradise or the Hell-fire.”

‘Îsâ عليه السلام said: “Love for this world and the hereafter cannot co-exist in the heart of a believer just as water and fire cannot co-exist in a single container.”

It is related that Jibra’îl عليه السلام said to Nûh عليه السلام: “O the one who had the longest life from all the Prophets! What do you think of this world?” He replied: “Like a house with two doors: I entered through one and came out from the other.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be very cautious of this world for it is more magical [than the magic] of Hârût and Mârût.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came before his Companions one day and asked: “Is there anyone among you who would like that Allâh removes blindness from him and gives him the ability to see? Listen! The person who is desirous of this world and has long hopes in it, then Allâh ﷻ makes his heart blind accordingly. The person

who abstains in this world and curtails his hopes in it, then Allâh ﷻ blesses him with knowledge without having to learn, and blesses him with guidance without having to seek guidance. Listen! There will come people after you whose kingdom will not remain established except through killing and oppression, who will not enjoy richness except through pride and miserliness, who will not experience love except through desires. Listen! Whoever among you experiences such a time and exercises patience on poverty despite being able to attain to prosperity, exercises patience on hatred despite being able to attain love, exercises patience on humiliation despite being able to attain to honour – and he does all this solely for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ - Allâh ﷻ will bestow him with the reward of 50 *siddîqîn* (a very lofty position just below that of the Prophets and Messengers).”

It is related that ‘Îsâ عليه السلام experienced severe rain, thunder and lightning one day. He therefore began looking for a place where he could find shelter. His eyes fell on a tent which was at a distance. He therefore went to it. When he reached there he saw a woman in it. He therefore turned away and left. His eyes then fell on a cave in a mountain. He went to it and saw a lion in it. He placed his hand on it and said: “O Allâh! You have made a refuge for everything but You did not provide me with any refuge.” Allâh ﷻ revealed to him saying: “Your refuge is in the place of My mercy. On the day of resurrection I will marry you to 100 *hûrîs* (maidens of Paradise) whom I created with My own hands. For your wedding I will feed for a period of 4 000 years. Each day of these years is equal to the entire life-span of this world. I will order an announcer to proclaim: ‘Where are all the abstinent people of the world? Attend the wedding of the abstinent personality of the world: ‘Îsâ ibn Maryam عليه السلام.’”

‘Îsâ ibn Maryam عليه السلام said: “Destruction to the person who is attached to this world. How he is going to die and leave it with all that it contains?! It deceives and abandons him but he places his trust in it and relies on it. Destruction to those who are deluded. How it shows them the things that they dislike, causes them to separate from the things that they love, and brings to them the things that they have been warned about?! Destruction to

the person whose only concern is this world and whose deeds are sins! How he will be disgraced tomorrow on account of his sins!?”

It is said that Allâh ﷻ addressed Mûsâ ﷺ thus: “O Mûsâ! What do you have to concern yourself with the abode of the wrongdoers? It is not an abode for you. Remove all your concerns from it and stay aloof from it through your intelligence. It is a terrible abode except for that person who does good deeds. Then what a beautiful abode it is! O Mûsâ! I lie in wait for the oppressor till I take him to task on behalf of the oppressed.”

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent Abû ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh ﷺ. He then returned with a lot of wealth from Bahrain. The Ansâr heard about the arrival of Abû ‘Ubaydah ﷺ. A large number of them therefore joined the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for the *fajr salâh*. When he completed the salâh he turned around. They all presented themselves before him. When he saw them he began smiling. He then said: “I think you’ll heard that Abû ‘Ubaydah came with something.” They replied: “Indeed, O Messenger of Allâh!” He said: “Rejoice and have hopes as long as you’ll experience ease. I take an oath by Allâh that I do not fear poverty with regard to you. Rather, I fear that the world be laid out before you [with all its riches] as it was laid out before those who came before you. You will then compete with one another for it just as they had competed with one another. It will then destroy you as it had destroyed them.”

Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The thing that I fear most for you is the bounties of the earth which Allâh ﷻ presents for you.” He was asked: “What are the bounties of the earth?” He replied: “The splendour [and attractions] of this world.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not occupy your hearts with the remembrance of the world.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ thus prohibited thinking about the world let alone being attracted to it.

‘Ammâr ibn Sa‘îd said: ‘Îsâ ﷺ passed by a village and saw its inhabitants dead in the courtyards and on the roads. He said: “O my disciples! These people have died due to the wrath [of Allâh ﷻ]. Had they died in any other

way, they would have buried each other.” The disciples said: “O spirit of Allâh! We would like to know what exactly happened to them.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ asked Allâh ﷻ about them. Allâh ﷻ revealed to him saying: “When night falls, you must address them, they will answer you.” When night fell, he climbed onto an elevated spot and called out: “O people of this village!” One of them replied: “Here I am, O spirit of Allâh!” ‘Îsâ ﷺ said: “What is your condition and what is your story?” They replied: “We spent the night peacefully but in the morning we fell into destruction.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ asked: “How did that happen?” They replied: “By our love for this world and our obedience to the sinful people.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ asked: “How was your love for the world?” They replied: “It was like the love of a child for his mother. When the world came to us, we rejoiced. When it turned away, we became grief-stricken and cried over it.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ asked: “What is wrong with your companions that they are not answering my questions?” He said: “It is because they are silenced and restrained by bridles of fire which are in the hands of very stern and strict angels.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ asked: “Then how is it that you were able to answer my questions although you are from among them?” He replied: “It is because I lived among them but I was not part of them. When the punishment descended upon them, it afflicted me as well. I am now suspended on the edge of Hell not knowing whether I will be saved from it or whether I will be flung into it.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ said to his disciples: “The eating of barley bread with coarse salt, wearing clothes of coarse woollen fabric, and sleeping on garbage heaps is a lot [to be grateful for] when it is accompanied with peace and tranquillity in this world and the hereafter.”

Anas ؓ said: *Al-‘Adbâ*, the camel of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ could not be beaten in a race. A Bedouin came with his camel and beat the camel of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. This weighed heavily on the Muslims. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ made it incumbent on Himself that He does not cause anything of this world to rise without causing it to fall.”

‘Îsâ ﷺ said: “Who can be so foolish as to build a house on the waves of the sea?! That is how this world is. Do not consider it, then, as a permanent

abode.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ was asked: “Teach us just one thing by which Allâh ﷻ will love us.” He replied: “Abhor this world and Allâh ﷻ will love you.”

Abû ad-Dardâ’ ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If you only knew what I know, you would laugh little and cried a lot. The world would become insignificant in your eyes and you would give preference to the hereafter.” Abû ad-Dardâ’ ﷺ then said from his side: “If you only knew what I know, you would have went out to the elevated places, seeking refuge and crying over your selves. You would have left all your possessions without anyone guarding over them and without returning to them except that which is of extreme necessity. However, harbouring hopes have caused remembrance of the hereafter to disappear from your hearts. The world has therefore become the objective of most of you. You have thus become like those who have no knowledge. So some of you are worse than animals that do not give up their desires in fear of the consequences thereof. What is wrong with you that you neither love each other nor advise each other despite being brothers in the religion of Allâh!? The barrier that is between your love for each other is due solely to your internal depravity. If you were to unite in righteousness, you would have had love for each other. What is wrong with you that you advise each other in matters of this world but do not advise each other in matters of the hereafter? What is wrong with you that none of you is able to advise the one whom he loves and help him in matters concerning his hereafter? All this is solely due to lack of î mân in your hearts. If you were convinced about the good and evil of the hereafter [Paradise and Hell] as you are convinced about this world, you would have given preference to seeking the hereafter because it has more control over your affairs. If you were to say that love for the present and immediate has overpowered you, then I say that I see you abandoning the present and immediate of this world for what is going to come later of this world: you impose hardships on your selves and engage in seeking things which perhaps you will not acquire. You are thus a terrible people. You have not realized your î mân with that with which true î mân is recognized in you. If you are in doubt as to what Muhammad ﷺ came with, come to us so that we may explain to you and show you the light by which your hearts will be satisfied. By Allâh, your intellects are not deficient whereby we could have excused you. You are able to take correct

decisions in your worldly matters and you are very judicious in your affairs. What is wrong with you that you rejoice over the little that you acquire of this world and are grieved by the little of this world that you lose?! This is to such an extent, that it becomes apparent on your faces and expressed by your tongues. You refer to them as calamities and you mourn over them. The majority of you have abandoned much of your religion. Yet this does not show on your faces and your condition does not change. I see that Allâh ﷻ has absolved Himself from you. You meet each other happily while each one of you dislikes to meet his friend in a way that he dislikes out of fear that he may meet him in a like manner. You are therefore in deception, your pastures are growing on hopes, and you have agreed with each other on rejecting death. I would love that Allâh ﷻ takes me away from you'll and joins me with he whom I love to see [Muhammad ﷺ]. Had he been alive, he would not have remained patiently with you'll. If you have any capacity for good, I have conveyed it to you. If you seek that which is with Allâh, you will find it very easy. I seek the assistance of Allâh ﷻ over my self and over you."

‘Îsâ عليه السلام said: "O disciples! Be satisfied with the little of this world while maintaining your religion just as the worldly people are satisfied with the little of religion while maintaining their world." The following poem also conveys this meaning:

أرى رجالاً بأدنى الدين قد قنعوا — وما أراهم رضوا في العيش بالدون
 فاستغن بالدين عن دنيا الملوك كما اس — تغنى الملوك بدنياهم عن الدين

"I see people who are satisfied with the least amount of religion but I do not see them satisfied with a little of life. You should therefore be satisfied with religion and be independent of the world of the kings just as the kings are satisfied with their world and are independent of religion."

‘Îsâ عليه السلام said: "O you who are seeking this world! Do good so that the world will leave you a better person." Our Prophet ﷺ said: "The world will come to you after me and it will devour all your î mân just as the fire devours firewood."

Allâh ﷻ addressed Mûsâ عليه السلام saying: “O Mûsâ! Do not incline towards love for the world for you will not come to Me with a sin greater than it [love for the world].” Mûsâ عليه السلام passed by a person who was crying. When he returned, he found him still crying. Mûsâ عليه السلام said: “O my Sustainer! Your servant is crying out of Your fear.” Allâh ﷻ replied: “O son of ‘Imrân! If his brains were to flow together with his eyes, and if he raised his hands [begging Me] till such a time that his hands fall off, I will not forgive him as long as he loves this world.”

‘Alî رضي الله عنه said: “The person who possesses the following six qualities would have left out no avenue seeking Paradise and no avenue fleeing from the Hell-fire: (1) he who recognizes Allâh ﷻ and obeys Him, (2) who recognizes Satan and disobeys him, (3) who recognizes the truth and follows it, (4) who recognizes falsehood and protects himself from it, (5) who recognizes the world and renounces it, (6) who recognizes the hereafter and seeks it.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “There were people in whose trust the world was placed. They fulfilled this trust to those who entrusted them. They then left this world with throbbing hearts.” He also said: “When a person competes with you in your religious matters, you should also compete with him. But when a person competes with you in your worldly matters, then fling the world into his throat.”

Luqmân عليه السلام said to his son: “O my son! This world is a deep ocean. Many people have drowned into it. So let the fear of Allâh ﷻ be your ship in this ocean, let its filling be belief in Allâh ﷻ, and let its sails be trust in Allâh ﷻ. Perhaps you will be saved, and I do not see you being saved.”

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “I pondered for very long over this verse:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا،
وَإِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرًّا

‘We have made whatever is on the earth as an adornment for it so that We may test which of them are best in deeds. We are certainly to turn all that is on it [earth] into a barren field.’” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 7-8)

A wise man said: “You will not get anything of this world except that there were people for it before you and there will be people for it after you. There is nothing for you of this world except a meal for a night and a meal for a day. Therefore do not kill yourself for just a meal. Fast from this world and eat of the hereafter. The capital wealth of this world is desire and its profit is the Hell-fire.”

A monk was asked: “What do you think of time?” He replied: “It wears out bodies, renews hopes, brings death close, and distances hopes.” He was asked: “What is the condition of its people?” He replied: “The one who gains of it remains tired and the one who loses in it is left distressed.”

It was in this regard that a poet said:

ومن يحمد الدنيا لعيش يسره — فسوف لعمرى عن قليل يلومها
إذا أدبرت كانت على المرء حسرة — وإن أقبلت كانت كثيرا همومها

“The person who praises this world for the life which he is enjoying, then I take an oath that he will soon dispraise it. When this world turns away, it is a remorse to the person. And when it turns to him, it causes much distress.”

A wise person said: “The world was existent when I was not in it. When the world goes away, I will not be in it. I am therefore not inclined to it. Surely its life is troublesome and its pleasure is filthy. Its people are always in fear of it: either by a bounty that will disappear, a calamity that will descend, or death that will put an end to everything.”

A person said: “One of the defects of this world is that it does not give anyone what he deserves. Instead, it either gives more or less.”

Sufyân *rahimahullâh* said: “Do you not look at the bounties as though they have earned the wrath [of Allâh ﷻ] for they have been placed in the hands of those who do not deserve them?”

Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî *rahimahullâh* said: “Whoever seeks the world out of love for it will always want more than what he has been given thereof. Whoever seeks the hereafter out of love for it will always want more than what he has been given. Neither of the two have a limit.”

A person said to Abû Hâzim: “I am complaining to you about my love for this world while it is not an abode for me.” He replied: “Look at all that Allâh ﷻ gave you of the world. Thereafter, only take that which is lawful for you and only use it in its rightful place. In so doing, your love for the world will not harm you.” The reason why he said this was that if he were to take his self to task for his love of the world, he would have tired himself to such an extent that he would have got fed up with the world and would have sought to come out of it.

Yahyâ ibn Mu‘âdh *rahimahullâh* said: “The world is the shop of Satan. You should therefore not steal anything from his shop. If not, he will come in search of it and take control of you.”

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “If this world was made of gold that would come to an end and the hereafter was made of earthenware that remains forever, it would be appropriate for us to give preference to earthenware that remains forever over gold that comes to an end. Now how foolish can we be that we have given preference to earthenware that comes to an end [this world] over gold that remains forever [the hereafter]!?”

Abû Hâzim *rahimahullâh* said: “Beware of the world! For I have heard that a person will be made to stand up on the day of resurrection. If he was one who used to respect and honour this world, it will be said: ‘This is the person who honoured something which Allâh disgraced.’”

Ibn Mas‘ûd ﷺ said: “Every person is a guest and his wealth is a loan. A guest eventually has to depart and the loan has to be paid back.” It was in this regard that a poet said:

وما المال والأهلون إلا ودیعة – ولا بد يوماً أن ترد الدوائع

“Wealth and families are nothing but loans. There will definitely come a day when all loans will have to be paid back.”

Some friends visited Râbi‘ah *rahimahallâh*. They mentioned the world and began talking ill of it. She said to them: “Do not make mention of it. Were it not for the effect that it has on your hearts, you would not have made mention of it. Listen! When a person loves something, he talks a lot about it.”

Ibrâhîm ibn Adham *rahimahullâh* was asked: “How are you?” He replied:

نرقع دنيانا بتمزيق ديننا — فلا ديننا يبقى ولا ما نرقع

نطوي لعبد أثر الله ربه — وجاد بدنياه لما يتوقع

“We patch our world by tearing apart our religion. And so, neither does our religion remain nor what we have patched. Glad tidings to the servant who gives preference to Allâh, his Sustainer, and is very generous in giving away his world for what is to come [the hereafter].

The following was also said in this regard:

أرى طالب الدنيا وإن طال عمره — ونال من الدنيا سرورا وأنعم

كبان بنى بنيانه فأقامه — فلما استوى ما قد بناه تحمدا

“I consider the person who seeks this world – even though he may have a very long life and acquired much happiness and bounties in this world – to be like a person who builds his building and erects it. And when what he built is fully erect, it is destroyed.”

The following was also said in this regard:

هب الدنيا تساق إليك عفوا — أليس مصير ذاك إلى انتقال

وما دنياءك إلا مثل نوء — أظلك ثم آذن بالنزال

“Assuming that the world were to send forgiveness to you. Is it not so that it will eventually pass away? Your world is nothing but like a shadow which shadows you and then announces its departure.”

Luqmân عليه السلام said to his son: “O my son! Sell your world for the hereafter and you will get the profit of both together. But do not sell your hereafter for this world, or else you will suffer the loss of both.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه said: “Allâh سبحانه divided the world into three parts: one part for the believer, one part for the hypocrite, and one part for the unbeliever. The believer uses it as a provision, the hypocrite adorns it, and the unbeliever takes enjoyment out of it.” A person said: “The world is a corpse. Therefore, whoever desires anything of it should be patient enough to live in the company of dogs [for they devour dead things].”

A poet says:

يا خاطب الدنيا إلى نفسها - تنح عن خطبتها تسلم
إن التي تخطب غدارة - قريبة العرس من المأتم

“O you who are proposing to the world! Abstain from proposing to her and you will be safe. Surely the one whom you are proposing to is very treacherous, and the day of mourning is very close to the wedding day.”

Abû ad-Dardâ’ رضي الله عنه said: “One of the ways that Allâh سبحانه made this world despicable is that a person cannot disobey [Allâh سبحانه] except in this world. And he cannot acquire what Allâh سبحانه has except by leaving it.”

A poet says:



إذا امتحن الدنيا لبيب تكشفت - له عن علو في ثياب صديق


“When this world tests an intelligent person, it exposes itself before him as an enemy in the garb of a friend.”

Another poet says:

يا راقدا الليل مسرورا بأوله - إن الحوادث قد يطرقن أسحارا
أفنى القرون التي كانت منعمة - كر الجديدين إقبالا وإدبارا
كم قد أبادت صروف الدهر من ملك - قد كان في الدهر نفاعا وضرارا
يا من يعانق دنيا لا بقاء له - يمسي ويصبح في دنياه سفارا
هلا تركت من الدنيا معانقة - حتى تعانق في الفردوس أبكارا
إن كنت تبغي جنان الخلد تسكنها - فنبغي لك أن لا تأمن النارا

“O you who sleeps happily in the first portion of the night! The ravages of time are knocking in the early dawn. They have put an end to all the eras that were spent in enjoyment. The days and nights are attacking by marching forward and backward. How many kings have the ravages of time destroyed! Kings who, in their time, were able to benefit and harm! O you who are embracing a world that has not eternity! You are going to bid farewell to this world in the morning or evening. Why did you not give up embracing this world so that you would have been able to embrace the virgins in Paradise!? If you desire the wings of eternity so that you could live in the world [forever], you should not consider yourself safe from the Hell-fire.”


Abû Umâmah al-Bâhilî  said: “When Muhammad  was commissioned as a Prophet, the armies of Satan went to Satan and said to him: ‘A Prophet has been commissioned and an *ummah* has been sent forth.’ He asked: ‘Do they love this world?’ They replied: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘If they love this world then I will not bother whether they worship idols or not. I will merely go to them in the morning and evening with three things: (1) earning wealth from unlawful sources, (2) spending it in unlawful avenues, (3) holding it back from its due recipients. All evil will emanate from this.’”


A person said to ‘Alî : “O leader of the believers! Describe this world to us.” He replied: “What should I say about a world wherein the healthy


person falls ill, the one who feels secure in it becomes remorseful, the person who is poor in it becomes grieved, the person who is rich in it is put through trials and tribulations, there is reckoning for all that is lawful in it, there is punishment for all that is unlawful in it, and there is censuring for all that is doubtful in it!?” He was asked the same question on another occasion so he replied: “Should I give a lengthy or a short reply?” The person said: “Give a short reply.” He said: “There is reckoning for all that is lawful in it and punishment for all that is unlawful in it.”

Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* said: “Fear the sorceress for it certainly bewitches the hearts of the ‘ulamâ’ as well.” In other words, fear the world.

Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî *rahimahullâh* said: “When the hereafter is in the heart, the world comes in order to compete with it. But when the world is in the heart, the hereafter does not come to compete with it because the hereafter is noble while the world is despicable. This is extremely serious. We hope that what Sayyâr ibn al-Hakam said is correct. He said: ‘The world and the hereafter get together in the heart. Whichever one is overpowering causes the other to be subservient to it.’”





Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* said: “Based on how much you grieve for the world, accordingly your concern for the hereafter leaves your heart. And based on how much you grieve for the hereafter, accordingly your concern for the world leaves your heart. This is based on what ‘Alî  said: ‘The world and the hereafter are co-wives. Depending on how much you please one of the two, the other falls [from grace].’”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “I take an oath by Allâh  that I have met such people who considered the world more insignificant than the ground on which they walk. They did not bother whether the world inclined towards the east or to the west.”


A person asked al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*: “What do you have to say about a person to whom Allâh  gave wealth from which he gives in charity and with which he maintains family ties? Is it good for him to enjoy that wealth?” He replied: “No. If he were to possess the entire world, it would

not be lawful for him to spend except what is of absolute necessity and he sends it forward for the day when he shall need it.”


Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “If the world with all its treasures were to present before me the lawful for which I will not be taken to account in the hereafter, I will consider it filthy just as one of you considers a dead animal to be filthy when he passes by it and recoils from it lest it touches his clothes.”

It is said that when ‘Umar  went to Syria, Abû ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh  received him while the latter was on a camel that had reins that were of rope [and not of leather]. ‘Umar  greeting him and inquired of him. He then went to his house and did not see anything in it except his sword, his shield and his saddlebags. ‘Umar  said to him: “You should get some other possessions as well.” He replied: “O leader of the believers! This is sufficient to convey us to our resting place.”

Sufyân *rahimahullâh* said: “Take from this world for your body and from the hereafter for your heart.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “By Allâh, the Banî Isrâ’îl began worshipping idols after having worshipped Allâh  on account of their love for this world.”

Wahb *rahimahullâh* said: “I read in a book: the world is the booty of the intelligent and the neglect of the ignorant ones. They do not recognize this till they leave the world. They then request to return to this world and they are not permitted to return.”

Luqmân  said to his son: “O my son! You have turned away from the world from the very day that you came to it and you have turned towards the hereafter. You are therefore closer to the abode [hereafter] that you are approaching than the abode [this world] which you are distancing yourself from.”

Sa‘îd ibn Mas‘ûd *rahimahullâh* said: “If you see a person progressing materially while retrogressing spiritually, and he is pleased with this

situation, then that is a person who is really deceived, who is being played around with, without his even realizing it.”

‘Amr ibn al-‘Âs رضي الله عنه said on the pulpit: “By Allâh, I have not come across a people more desirous of that which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was more abstentious from than you people. By Allâh, more than three days did not pass the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ without what he owed was more than what was owed to him.”

After reciting the following verse, al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said:

فَلَا تُغُرَّكُمْ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا

“Let not the life of this world deceive you.” (Sûrah Luqmân, 31: 33)




“Who made this statement? It is He who created it, and He who knows best about it. Beware of all the preoccupations of this world, for surely, the preoccupations of this world are many. When a person opens one door of preoccupation, it is most likely that that one door will open up ten doors to him.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* also said: “Man is most unfortunate: he is pleased with an abode whose lawful is accountable and whose unlawful is punishable. If he takes of the lawful of this world, he is taken to account for it. If he takes of the unlawful of this world, he is punished for it. He considers his wealth to be little but not his good deeds. He rejoices at some calamity in his religious matters but is distressed by some calamity in his worldly matters.”


Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* wrote to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh*: “Peace be on you. It is as though you are the last person on whom death has been decreed. And that you have already died.” ‘Umar *rahimahullâh* replied: “Peace be on you. It is as though you are in a world that never existed and in the hereafter that is still existent.”


Al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyâd *rahimahullâh* said: “Entering in this world is very easy but leaving it is very difficult.” A person said: “It is extremely astonishing

that a person knows that death is a fact, yet he rejoices so much. It is extremely astonishing that a person knows that the Hell-fire is a fact, yet he laughs so much. It is extremely astonishing that a person sees the turmoil of the world together with its people, yet he is satisfied with the world. It is extremely astonishing that a person knows that destiny is a fact, yet he makes so many plans.”

A 200 year old man from Najrân came to Mu‘âwiyah . The latter asked him about this world and how he found it? The old man replied: “A few years of hardship and a few years of ease. A day of this and a day of that. A night of this and a night of that. A child is born and a person passes away. Were it not for the new born, the creation will come to an end. Were it not for the person who passes away, this world would not have been sufficient for those who are inhabiting it.” Mu‘âwiyah  said to him: “Ask for whatever you wish [and I will give it to you].” The old man said: “Can you return my life that has passed or can you repulse my death that has approached?” Mu‘âwiyah  replied: “That is not within my power.” The old man said: “Then I have no other need which I could ask you to fulfil.”

Dâ’ûd at-Tâ’î *rahimahullâh* said: “O man! You rejoice by reaching your goals although you have only reached them by the ending of your life. You procrastinated in doing good deeds as though the benefits thereof are for others [and not for your self].”

Bishr *rahimahullâh* said: “The person who asks Allâh  for this world has in fact asked Him for a lengthy reckoning before Him.”

Abû Hâzim *rahimahullâh* said: “There is nothing in this world which pleases you without Allâh  having attached something to it which displeases you.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “The soul of man will not leave this world without three regrets: (1) that he did not satisfy himself with all that he hoarded, (2) that he did not realize all that he hoped, (3) that he did not prepare sufficient provisions for what is to come.”

Abû Sulaymân *rahimahullâh* said: “None can avoid the attractions of this world except he whose heart is preoccupied with the hereafter.”

Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* said: “We have agreed with each other in having love for this world. We therefore do not command each other [to do good], we do not prohibit each other [from doing evil], and Allâh ﷻ will not leave us like this. If only I knew what type of punishment will befall us from Allâh ﷻ.”



Abû Hâzim *rahimahullâh* said: “Small [and trivial] things of this world cause a person to become unmindful of many things of the hereafter.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “Consider this world to be insignificant. By Allâh, it is not as delightful to anyone as to the person who considers it to be insignificant.” He also said: “When Allâh ﷻ wills good for a person, He gives him something of this world. He then withholds from giving him. When that something is finished, Allâh ﷻ gives him again. When a person is insignificant in the sight of Allâh ﷻ, He gives him in great abundance of this world.”

Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir *rahimahullâh* said: “A person fasts throughout his life without stopping, remains in the worship of Allâh ﷻ at night without sleeping, gives his wealth in charity, wages jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ, and abstains from the prohibitions of Allâh ﷻ. However, on the day of resurrection, he is brought forward and an announcement is made: ‘This person considered to be great that which Allâh ﷻ considered to be insignificant. And he considered to be insignificant that which Allâh ﷻ considered to be great.’ What do you think will the position of this person be? Who from among us is not like this: the world is great in our eyes and together with this we have committed so many sins and acts of disobedience.”

Abû Hâzim *rahimahullâh* said: “The provisions of the world and the hereafter are severe. As for the provisions of the hereafter, you will not find helpers for it. As for the provisions of the world, before you can even strike

any of them with your hands, you will find that an immoral person has already surpassed you to it.”

Abû Hurayrah  said: “The world is suspended between the skies and the earth like a tattered and torn water skin. It is calling out to its Sustainer ever since He created it and will continue doing so till the day when He destroys it, saying: “O my Sustainer! Why do You dislike me?” Allâh  replies to it saying: “Remain silent, O you who are nothing!”

‘Abdullâh ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh* said: “The love for the world and sins in the heart have caused it to become deserted. So how will good ever reach it?!”

Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullâh* said: “The person whose heart rejoices with anything of this world has lost all wisdom. The person who tramples his desires with his feet has caused Satan to leave from his shade. The person whose knowledge surpasses his desires is the truly victorious one.”

Someone said to Bishr *rahimahullâh*: “So and so person has passed away.” He replied: “He accumulated the world and has now left for the hereafter, and he has caused loss to himself.” Someone said: “But he used to do this and he used to do that – enumerating various good deeds that he used to do.” Bishr *rahimahullâh* replied: “Of what benefit will all that be when he was engrossed in accumulating the world?”

A person said: “The world abhors us while we love it. What will happen if it begins to love us?” Someone asked a wise man: “For whom is this world?” He replied: “It is for the person who forsakes it.” He was asked: “For whom is the hereafter?” He replied: “It is for the person who seeks it.”

A wise man said: “The world is a place of destruction and the most destroyed part of it is that heart which the world inhabits. The hereafter is a place of inhabiting, and the most inhabited part of it is that heart which seeks it.”

Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: “Ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* was from among those *murîds* who spoke the language of truth in this world. He admonished

a Muslim brother and warned him of the wrath of Allâh ﷻ, saying: ‘O my brother! This world is invalid, it causes a person to slip and err, and it is an abode of humiliation. Its inhabitants are heading towards destruction. Its residents are going to visit the graves. All its uniting and gathering are dependent on separation. Its riches are bound to be spent till poverty takes over. Abundance in it is a cause of hardship, while hardship therein is a cause of ease. You should therefore seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ and be satisfied with the provision of Allâh ﷻ. Do not borrow from your temporary abode for your eternal abode because your life is a moving shadow and an inclining wall. Increase your good deeds and curtail your hopes.’”

Ibrâhîm ibn Adham *rahimahullâh* said to a person: “What is more beloved to you: a dirham in your dream or a dînâr when you are awake?” The person replied: “A dînâr when I am awake.” Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* said: “You are lying because whatever you love in this world is as though you love it in your dream. And whatever you do not love in the hereafter is as though you do not love it while you are awake.”

Ismâ‘îl ibn ‘Ayyâsh *rahimahullâh* said: “Our friends used to refer to the world as a *khinzîrah* (a female pig). They would say: ‘Away from us, O *khinzîrah*!’ If they could find a worse name for it, they would have given it that name.”

Ka‘b *rahimahullâh* said: “The world will be made so beloved to you that you will begin worshipping it and its people.”

Yahyâ ibn Mu‘âdh ar-Râzî *rahimahullâh* said: “The intelligent ones are of three categories: (1) the person who forsook this world before it could leave him, (2) the person who dug his grave before he could enter it, (3) the person who pleased his Creator before he could meet Him.” He also said: “The world has reached such a level of ill-luck that it causes you to desire things that distract you from the obedience of Allâh ﷻ. So how can you ever fall into its trap?”

Bakr ibn ‘Abdillâh *rahimahullâh* said: “The person who desires to be independent of this world through this world is like a person trying to extinguish a fire with straw.”

Bindâr *rahimahullâh* said: “If you see the children of this world talking about asceticism, you should conclude that they are the targets of Satan’s ridicule.” He also said: “The person who turns his attention to the world, its fires, i.e. greed, will burn him till he is reduced to ash. The person who turns his attention to the hereafter, its fires will purify him till he becomes a gold ingot from which benefit is derived. The person who turns his attention to Allâh ﷻ, the fires of *tauhîd* will burn him till he becomes a jewel for which no price can be attached.”

‘Alî ﷻ said: “This world is only six things: (1) that which is eaten, (2) that which is drunk, (3) that which is worn, (4) that which is ridden, (5) that which is married, (6) that which is inhaled. The best of foods is honey. And it is the produce of a fly [bee]. The best of drinks is water. And this is drunk by all – the righteous and the sinner. The best of clothes is silk. And it is the produce of a worm [silkworm]. The best of conveyances is the horse. And on it men are killed. The best of marriage partners is a woman. And she is an exit for urine in an exit for urine. A woman beautifies the best part of her and yet the ugliest parts of her is desired. The best of the inhaled items is musk. And it is blood.”

ALSO ON DISPRAISE OF THE WORLD

A person said: “O people! Do deeds at a leisurely pace but be constantly fearful of Allâh ﷻ. Do not be deceived by hopes and forgetting death. Do not incline towards the world for it is very deceitful and very devious. It has adorned its self with its deception, seduced you by its hopes, and beautified itself for its suitors. It is thus like a bride that has appeared: the eyes look at her, the hearts are obsessed by her, and the souls are enamoured by her. How many lovers it has killed! How many of those who relied on her has she deceived! So look at her for what she really is. She is an abode whose misfortunes are many, whose new is bound to become old, whose kingdom is bound to come to an end, whose honourable is bound to be disgraced, whose plenty is bound to become little, whose love is bound to die, and whose goodness is bound to miss. So wake up – may Allâh ﷻ shower His mercy on you – from your slumber and get up from your sleep before it is announced that so and so person is sick or has become extremely weak. Is there any one to show the medication? Is there any way to obtain a doctor so that a doctor could be summoned for you? And there is no hope for your recovery? It will then be announced that so and so person made such a will, and calculated his wealth. It will then be announced that his tongue has gone heavy. He therefore cannot talk to his brothers and cannot recognize his neighbours. Your forehead then begins to perspire, and your moans and groans continue unabated, you become convinced [of your death], your eyes begin staring, your thoughts become a reality, you begin stammering and stuttering and your brothers begin crying. It is said to you: ‘This is your son, this is so and so brother of yours.’ You are prevented from speaking and you therefore cannot say anything. Your tongue is sealed, so it does not move. Death then descends upon you and your soul is taken from your body. It is then raised to the sky. Your brothers then come around you. Your burial shrouds are brought. They bathe you and then enshroud you. Your visitors stop coming to visit you. Those who were jealous of you are now at rest. Your family has gone back to your wealth. And you are left mortgaged by your deeds.”

A person said to a king: “The person who is most worthy of dispraising and detesting the world is he who is given abundance in it and provided for his needs. The reason for this is that he fears a calamity that afflicts his wealth and completely destroys it, or after his wealth has been accumulated, he has to separate himself from it, or a calamity befalls his authority and destroys it from its foundations, or a calamity permeates his body and causes him to become ill, or he is afflicted by such a calamity that he does not want to even mention it to his friends. The world is therefore most worthy of being detested. It is the one that takes away without giving in return whatever was given to it. It causes the person who is attached to it to laugh while it causes others to laugh at him. It cries for him while it causes others to cry over him. It extends its hand in order to give to him while at the same time, it has extended its hand in order to take back whatever it has given to him. It places a crown on the person who is attached to it, but tomorrow it will cover him with soil. Whatever goes and whatever remains is equal in its sight [there is no difference between the two]. When one has left this world and the other remains, it finds a deputy in the one who has remained behind [in other words, it causes him to become engrossed in it], and it is happy with both as alternatives.”


Al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* wrote to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* saying: “This world is an abode of defamation, it is not an abode of permanent residency. Âdam ﷺ was only sent down to it from Paradise as a punishment. You should therefore be wary of it, O leader of the believers! The provision of this world is to abstain from it. The wealth of this world is poverty. Someone is killed in it at every moment. It humiliates those who honour it. It impoverishes those who amass it. It is like a poison – only he who does not know it will consume it, while in it lies his death. You should therefore be in this world like a person who is treating his wound. He bears a little fever lest he is made to suffer for a long time. He bears the severity of the medicine lest he is made to bear the pain for a long time. You should therefore beware of this treacherous, double-dealing, and deceiving world which has beautified itself with its deception, seduced by its trickery, descended by instilling hopes and desires, and constantly put off its suitors. It is thus like a bride that has appeared before everyone: the eyes are looking at her, the hearts are enamoured by her and the souls are in love with her while she detests all of them. Therefore,

neither do those who have remained behind take a lesson from those who have passed away. Neither do the latter generations take an admonition from the previous generations. Neither does a person who has recognized Allâh ﷻ take a lesson when he is informed about the world. The person who is in love with it has all his needs of the world fulfilled. He is therefore deluded and transgresses the limits. He forgets the hereafter and therefore occupies his intellect with this world. This continues till he slips, his remorse becomes serious, his regret is plentiful, and the pangs of death have assembled around him and they cause him pain. Remorse over all that he has missed chokes and suffocates him. He who was desirous of this world did not achieve all that he had sought from it. He did not give himself any rest from the tiredness that he experienced in its quest. In so doing, he left this world without any provision and went towards a place where he will get no rest. So be wary of it, O leader of the believers! Your happiest moment should be when you are most cautious of this world. This is because each time a person feels satisfied with it, it dispatches him towards some calamity. The harmful of this world is deceiving. And the beneficial of this world is treacherous and harmful. Ease in this world is bound to calamity. Eternity in this world is ended by its fleeting nature. The happiness of this world is mixed with numerous worries. Whatever of this world that has turned around and gone will not return. At the same time, whatever is to come is unknown. It can therefore not be waited upon. All its hopes are false and all its wishes are baseless. Its purity is bound to become filthy. Its enjoyment is bound to become troublesome. Man is in danger in this world. If he has intelligence and is able to see, he will realize that he is one of the bounties that is in danger and a calamity that is cautioned about. Had the Creator not informed us about it, and had He not set forth a parable for it, the world would have woken up a sleeping person and brought to attention the person who is heedless. How, then, can we remain heedless seeing that Allâh ﷻ has warned us against it and admonished us with regard to it?! It has no value whatsoever in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. He did not look at it ever since He created it. It offered itself to your Prophet ﷺ with all its keys and treasures, without causing any decrease in it in the sight of Allâh ﷻ even to the extent of the wing of a mosquito. Yet he refused to accept it because he disliked to disobey the command of Allâh ﷻ, to like something which his Creator abhors, or to look up to something which his

Master debased. Allâh ﷻ therefore contracted it away from the righteous as a test while He expanded it before His enemies as a deception. The person who is deceived by it and enjoys authority over it therefore feels that he has been honoured by it. He forgot what Allâh ﷻ did to Muhammad ﷺ when he tied a rock to his stomach [out of hunger]. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ reports from Allâh ﷻ that He said to Mûsâ ﷺ: “If you see wealth coming to you, say to yourself: ‘This is a sin whose consequences have been hastened.’ If you see poverty coming to you, say to yourself: ‘Welcome to the salient feature of the righteous.’” If you wish, you may emulate ‘Îsâ ibn Maryam ﷺ. He used to say: “My gravy is hunger. My salient feature is fear. My clothing is wool. My light is the moon. My conveyance are my feet. My food and fruit is that which the earth produces. I spend the night with nothing and I spend the day with nothing. And there is no one on earth who is richer than me.”

Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullâh* said: “When Allâh ﷻ sent Mûsâ ﷺ and Hârûn ﷺ to Pharaoh, He said to them: ‘Do not let his clothing which he wears in this world intimidate you. For surely his forelock is under My control. He can neither talk, blink nor breathe without My permission. You should neither be attracted to whatever he is enjoying of this world. It is nothing but the splendour of this worldly life and the finery of those living in luxury. If you want Me to adorn you with worldly splendour whereby, if Pharaoh were to see it, he would realize that his power is unable to match what you have been given, I can do that. However, I turn your attention away from that and I cause you to recoil from that. This is what I do to My friends (*auliyâ*’): I protect them from the bounties of this world just as a caring shepherd protects his flock from dangerous pastures. I distance My friends from the delights of this world just as a caring shepherd distances his camels from deceptive places. All this I do, not because they [My friends] are insignificant in My sight, but so that they may receive My share of munificence safely and perfectly. My friends adorn themselves for Me through humility, fear, devotion and piety which sprouts from their hearts and appears on their bodies. These qualities are their clothing which they wear, their outer garments which they display, their inner being which they perceive, their salvation with which they reach their goal, the hope which

they desire, their grandeur with which they are proud, and their distinguishing mark with which they are recognized. If you meet them, be humble before them and submit your heart and tongue before them. You should know that whoever threatens a friend of Mine has declared open war to Me. I will then exact a revenge on his behalf on the day of resurrection.””

One day, ‘Alî  delivered a sermon and said in it: “You should know well that you are all to die, you are to be raised after your death, you are to be made to present your deeds, and you are to be recompensed for your deeds. Do not let, then, this worldly life to delude you, for it is surrounded by calamities, it is known to be fleeting, and it is described to be treacherous. Everything that is in it is bound to come to an end. It behaves erratically with people. Its situations are not constant. And its inhabitants are not safe from its evil. While its inhabitants are enjoying the prosperity and happiness of this world, they are suddenly in calamities and delusions of it. Differing situations and changing times. Life in it is despicable and prosperity in it is not eternal. The inhabitants of this world are mere targets – it shoots them with its arrows and drives them away with its death. Each person’s death in this world is pre-destined and he shall receive his full share. O servants of Allâh! You and the path on which you are on in this world is the same path on which those before you were. They had longer lives than you, they were more powerful than you, they built better abodes than you, and they left behind far greater traces. Their voices have become low and subdued after moving around for so long. Their bodies have become decomposed. Their houses have fallen on their roofs. Their traces have been wiped out. They have exchanged their fortified palaces, couches and laid out carpets for stones and rocks laid out in the graves that are cut and coated in clay. Its place is therefore very close and its inhabitant is a stranger between people of a deserted place and people of a place in which they are fully occupied. They do not enjoy any inhabitancy nor do they maintain relationships like those of neighbours and brothers, despite being so close to each other, despite being neighbours, and despite the abodes being next to each other. How can there be any relationship among them when stones and soil have devoured them? When they have become dead after having life? When they have become corpses after enjoying the lushness of life? Even their beloved ones are terrified of them. They are living beneath the soil. They have departed and will not return. Far, very

far! Why not? It is merely a word which he is uttering, and beyond them is the grave, till the day when they shall be raised. It is as though you have reached where they reached of tribulation and solitude in the place of rest, you have mortgaged a bed for it, and that which bids farewell to you has embraced you. What will be your condition when you witness all the incidents, when the graves are overturned, what the chests conceal will be realized, and you are made to stand before the Mighty King for your reckoning? The hearts will tremble and fly in fear of the past sins, all the veils and curtains will be removed from you, and all your faults and secrets will be exposed. It is at that time when every soul will be recompensed for whatever it earned. Allâh ﷻ says:

لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى

“that He may requite those who do evil with that which they have done, and reward those who do good, with what is best.” (Sûrah an-Najm, 53: 31)

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ

“And the book [of deeds] will be placed, and you will see the criminals fearful of that which is recorded therein.” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 49)

May Allâh ﷻ make us and you to act on his Book and to emulate His friends till the eternal abode [of Paradise] welcomes us and you out of His bounty. Surely He is worthy of praise, mighty.”

A wise person said: “The days are arrows and people are targets. Time shoots at you every day with its arrows. It carries you away with its days and nights till all parts of your body are drowned. How, then, can your safety be guaranteed when days fall upon you and nights swiftly penetrate your body? If the harms that are caused by days were to be exposed before you, you would recoil from every day that comes to you and you would consider the passing of hours to be very heavy on you. However, the plan of Allâh ﷻ is above the plan of consideration. By forgetting the havocs of this world is the taste of its pleasures experienced. Yet, it is more bitter than colocynth (also called bitter apple) when it is powdered by a physician. A

person is unable to describe its defects by its mere actions. The strange and astonishing things that it does cannot be encompassed by a lecturer. O Allâh! Guide us to what is correct.”

A wise person was asked to describe the world and the extent of its existence. He said: “The world is your time in which your sight returns to you because whatever has passed from you cannot be acquired by you. As for that which has not come as yet, you have no knowledge concerning it. Time is a day that is coming, whose night takes it further away, whose hours bring it closer, and whose alternation causes man to go through changes and losses. Time can be relied upon to scatter groups, to break up unity, and to convey fortunes. Hopes are lengthy while life is short, and to Allâh ﷻ alone are all matters destined.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* delivered a sermon and said: “O people! You have been created for a matter which if you believe in it, you are certainly foolish, and if you reject it, you are certainly destroyed. You have not been created for eternity. Rather, you are to be conveyed from one abode to another abode. O servants of Allâh! You are in an abode wherein your food causes you to choke and your drink causes you to swallow the wrong way. There is no bounty which you are pleased with without another bounty whose departure you do not like leaves you. You should therefore do deeds for that abode towards which you are going and wherein you shall abide forever.” He was then overcome by crying and he got down from the pulpit.

‘Alî ﷻ said the following in his sermon: “I advise you to fear Allâh ﷻ and to abandon the world which abandons you even if you do not like to abandon it. The very world which decomposes your bodies while you desire that they remain young. Your similitude and that of the world is like that of a people on a journey who followed a particular path. They were so certain of it that it was as though they cut it themselves, and knew it so well that they already reached their destination. It is highly possible that the path leads them to a forest. It is highly possible that a person has just a day of this world left for him and a swift seeker seeks him till he has to depart from this world. You should therefore not be terrified by its misfortunes and hardships, for it is certainly going to come to an end. Nor should you

rejoice by its fortunes and bounties for they are certainly going to come to an end. I am astonished by the person seeking this world while death is seeking him. I am astonished by the person who is neglectful while he himself is not neglected.”

Muhammad ibn al-Husayn *rahimahullâh* said: “When the people of virtue, knowledge, cognizance and etiquette learnt that Allâh ﷻ discredited the world, that He does not like it for His friends, that it is insignificant and despicable in His sight, that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ abstained from it, and that he warned his Companions of its temptations, they ate of this world with equity, they sent forward whatever was extra, they took thereof what was sufficient, they abandoned that which causes distraction, they sufficed with clothing which covers the ‘*aurah* (those parts of the body that have to be compulsorily covered), they ate the minimum of food which is sufficient to dispel hunger, they looked at the world with eyes that were convinced that it is fleeting, they looked at the hereafter with eyes that were convinced that it is eternal, in doing all this, they took provisions of this world like the provisions taken by a traveller. They thus rendered the world deserted and inhabited the hereafter. They looked at the hereafter with their hearts. They realized that they will look at it with their hearts when they were convinced that they are going to journey to it with their bodies. They exerted themselves for a short while and enjoyed the benefits thereof for a lengthy time. All this was by the inspiration of their noble Master [Allâh ﷻ] – they loved what He loved for them and they abhorred what He abhorred for them.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF CONTENTMENT

You should know that it is the duty of a poor person to be content, to sever all greed from the creation, not to turn his attention to what they have, and not to be covetous of acquiring wealth irrespective of how it may be. This is not possible for him to do without his being content with the basic necessities as regards food, clothing and shelter. He should confine himself to the smallest amount and the lowest quality. He should defer his hopes for the next day or the next month. He should not occupy his heart for anything beyond a month. The desire for more or his lengthy hopes will force him to lose the honour of contentment and will certainly adulterate him with covetousness and the humiliation of greed. Covetousness and greed will draw him towards evil traits and towards committing evils that will tear down his dignity.

Man, by nature, is greedy, covetous and discontented. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a man were to have two valleys of gold, he would seek a third one. Nothing will fill the belly of man except soil. Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of he who turns to Him in repentance.”

Abû Wâqid al-Laythî ؓ said: “When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ received any revelation, we would go to him so that he may teach us some of what was revealed to him. I went to him one day, so he said: ‘Allâh ﷻ says: ‘We sent down wealth for the establishment of salâh and the giving of zakâh. If man had a valley of gold, he would desire to have a second one. If he had two valleys of gold, he would desire to have a third one. Nothing but soil will fill the belly of man. Allâh accepts the repentance of he who turns to Him in repentance.’”

Abû Mûsâ al-Ash‘arî ؓ said: “A sûrah similar to Sûrah Barâ’ah was revealed and then raised up again. The following was memorized of this sûrah: Surely Allâh ﷻ shall assist this religion with people who have nothing. If man had two valleys of wealth, he would desire a third one.

Nothing but soil will fill the belly of man. Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of he who turns to Him in repentance.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Two persons are never satiated: one who is engrossed in [the acquisition of] knowledge and one who is engrossed in [the acquisition of] wealth.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Man becomes old and weak, but two qualities in him remain young: hopes and the love of wealth.”

Since this trait in man is extremely devious, deeply-embedded and destructive, Allâh ﷻ and the Messenger ﷺ praise the quality of contentment. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to the person who is guided to Islam, whose livelihood is sufficient, and is content with it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection, every single person – rich or poor – would love that he was given the barest minimum in the world.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Wealth is not based on abundant possessions. True wealth is the wealth of the soul.” He prohibited intense covetousness and going to excesses in seeking sustenance. He said: “Listen, O people! Be graceful in seeking for surely a person will only receive what was written for him. A person will not leave this world without having received what was written for him even if the world thinks otherwise.”

It is related that Mûsâ ﷺ asked his Sustainer ﷻ thus: “Which of Your servants are the wealthiest?” Allâh ﷻ replied: “The person who is most content with what I gave him.” He asked: “Which of them is the most just?” Allâh ﷻ replied: “The person who is more just than his own self.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd ﷺ relates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The Holy Spirit [Jibra’îl ﷺ] blew into my heart [saying]: ‘A soul shall never die till

it receives its sustenance completely. Therefore, continue fearing Allâh ﷻ and ask in an excellent manner.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ says: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to me: ‘O Abû Hurayrah! When you experience extreme hunger, suffice with a piece of bread and a tumbler of water and let the world be ruined.’”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘Be abstentious and you will be the most devoted of worshippers. Be content and you will be the most grateful of people. Love for people what you love for your self and you will be a true believer.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibited covetousness. Abû Ayyûb al-Ansârî ؓ relates that a Bedouin came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Advise me, but be very brief [in your advice].” He ﷺ said: “When you offer salâh, offer it like the person who is bidding farewell [to this world]. Do not utter anything which you will regret tomorrow. Totally renounce and forego what people possess.”

‘Auf ibn Mâlik al-Ashja’î ؓ says: “We were about nine, eight or seven people with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He said to us: ‘Are you not going to pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh?’ We replied: ‘Did we not already pledge allegiance to you, O Messenger of Allâh?’ He said again: ‘Are you not going to pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh?’ We extended our hands and pledged allegiance to him. One of us said to him: ‘We have already pledged allegiance to you. So on what should we pledge allegiance to you [now]?’ He ﷺ said: ‘That you worship Allâh ﷻ and do not ascribe any partner to Him. That you offer the five salâhs and that you listen and obey.’ He then said something silently: ‘That you do not ask the people for anything.’ I have seen some of these people [adhering so strictly to this advice] that if his whip would fall down [while he was on his animal], he would not ask anyone to pass it to him.”

‘Umar ؓ said: “Covetousness is poverty and renouncement is wealth. Surely the person who renounces what people possess shall be most

independent of them.” A wise person was asked: “What is it to be wealthy?” He replied: “Your having very few hopes and your pleasure with what is sufficient for you.”


A poet says in this regard:

العيش ساعات تمرّ - وخطوب أيام تكرر
اقنع بعيشك ترضه - واترك هواك تعيش حرّ
فلرب حترف ساقه - ذهب وياقوت ودرّ


“Life is a few hours that pass and daily situations that repeat themselves. Be content with your life and you will be pleased with it. Abandon your desires and you will live a free person. For many a death has been caused by gold, sapphires and pearls.”

Muhammad ibn Wâsi‘ *rahimahullâh* used to moisten dry bread with water and eat it. He would say: “Whoever is content with this will not be in need of anyone.”

Sufyân *rahimahullâh* said: “The best of your world is that by which you are not put through a trial and test. The best by which you have been put through a trial and test is that which has left your possession.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd  said: “An angel announces every single day: ‘O man! A little that suffices you is better than a lot that causes you to transgress.’”

Samî‘ ibn ‘Ajlân *rahimahullâh* said: “O man! Your stomach is merely one span by one span in size. Why, then, should it cause you to enter the Hell-fire?” A wise person was asked: “What is your wealth?” He replied: “To beautify yourself outwardly, to be balanced internally, and to renounce what people possess.”

It is related that Allâh  said: “O man! If the entire world belonged to you, you would have only had your most basic food thereof. Since I am giving you your basic food from the world and made the account thereof to others besides you, I am being extremely kind to you.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه said: “If any of you has to make a request for some need, he should do so very mildly. He should not go to a person and say: ‘You are like this and like that’ [praising him] and breaking his back [i.e. forcing him to give you something], because whatever sustenance is written in your favour will certainly come to you.”

A person from the Banû Umayyah wrote to Abû Hâzim demanding that he should present his needs to him. He wrote in reply: “I presented my needs before my Master [Allâh سبحانه]. I accepted whatever He gave me, and remained content with whatever He held back from me.”

A wise person was asked: “What causes the most happiness to an intelligent person? And what is most helpful in repulsing grief?” He replied: “The good deeds that he sends forward cause the most happiness. And the thing that is most helpful in repulsing grief is for him to be pleased with whatever has been destined for him.”

A wise person said: “I found the one who is envious to be in the lengthiest grief, the one who enjoys life the most to be the one who is content, the one who is greedy when covetous to be the most patient in bearing harm, the one leading the most comfortable life to be the one who renounces the world the most, and the ‘âlim who commits excesses to be the one who has the greatest remorse.”

A poet says:




أُرفه ببال فتى أمسى على ثقة - أن الذي قسم الأرزاق يرزقه
فالعرض منه مصون لا يدنسه - والوجه منه جديد ليس يخلقه
إن القناعة من يحلل بساحتها - لم يلق في دهره شيئاً يؤرثه

“The most comfortable condition is that of a youth who has full conviction that the being who distributes sustenance [Allâh سبحانه] will provide him with sustenance. The honour of such a person is protected and never tainted. His face is new, never worn out. Whoever descends onto the field of contentment will never ever experience sleeplessness in his life.”

A poet says:

حتى متى أنا في حل وترحال - وطول سعي وإدبار وإقبال
ونازح الدار لا أنفك مغتربا - عن الأحبة لا يدرون ما حالي
بمشرق الأرض طورا ثم مغربها - لا يخطر الموت من حرصي على بالي
ولو قنعت أتاني الرزق في دعة - ان القنوع الغني لا كثرة المال

“For how long am I going to continue settling down and travelling, moving about for lengthy periods of time, going and coming? For how long am I going to remain distant from my house, far away from beloved ones who do not know what my condition is? I am in the east for some time and then in the west – not even thinking about death because of my greed over my self. Had I been content, sustenance would have come meekly to me. The person who is content is really the wealthy one, not the person who has a lot of wealth.”

‘Umar  said: “Should I not inform you of what I consider to be lawful of the wealth given by Allâh ? Two sets of clothing for my winter and my summer, and a conveyance that is sufficient for myhajj and ‘umrah. Thereafter, my food should be like the food of any other person from the Quraysh – I am neither loftier than them nor lower than them. I take an oath by Allâh  that I do not know whether even this is lawful for me or not.” In other words, he doubted whether this amount is more than the sufficient amount on which it is incumbent to be content.

A Bedouin reprimanded his brother for his covetousness and said to him: “You are seeking and you are also sought. The one [death] who will certainly catch you is seeking you while you yourself are seeking something that has already been destined for you. It is as though what is hidden from you has exposed itself before you and you have moved away from what you are in. O my brother! You are behaving as though you have never seen a covetous person who is deprived nor an abstentious person who is provided with sustenance.”

It is in this regard that a poet says:

أراك يزيدك الإثراء حرصاً - على الدنيا كأنك لا تموت
فهل لك غاية إن صرت يوماً - إليها قلت حسبي قد رضى

“I see wealth increasing your greed for this world as though you are not going to die. Do you have any limit, which, if you reach one day, you will say to yourself: ‘This is enough for me. I am now satisfied.’?”

Ash-Sha‘bî *rahimahullâh* said: “It is related that a person trapped a lark. The lark asked him: ‘What do you want to do with me?’ He replied: ‘I will slaughter you and eat you.’ The lark said: ‘By Allâh, I will not be able to satisfy a little hunger nor will I be able to satisfy a full hunger. However, I will teach you three things that will be better for you than your eating me. I will teach you the first thing while I am in your hand, the second thing when I am on the tree, and the third thing when I am on the mountain.’ The man said: ‘Okay, tell me the first thing.’ The lark said: ‘Do not lament over what you have missed.’ The man set it free. When it went onto the tree, he said to it: ‘Tell me the second thing.’ The lark said: ‘Do not believe the impossible to be possible.’ The lark then flew to the mountain and said: ‘O wretched one! Had you slaughtered me you would have taken out from my craw (stomach) two pearls the weight of each one being 20 *mithqâls* (93.6g).’ [When the man heard this], he bit his lip in regret and said: ‘Tell me the third thing.’ The lark replied: ‘You have already forgotten the first two, now how can I tell you the third thing? Did I not tell you not to lament over what you have missed? And that you should not believe the impossible to be possible? My flesh, blood and feathers cannot even weigh 20 *mithqâls*, how can there be two pearls in my craw, each one weighing 20 *mithqâls*?!’ The lark then flew away.” This is an example of man’s excessive greed. This greed causes him to become so blind that he is unable to fathom the truth to such an extent that he considers the impossible to be possible.

Ibn as-Simâk *rahimahullâh* said: “Hope is a rope around your heart and a shackle around your feet. Remove hope from your heart and the shackle from your feet will come out automatically.”

Abû Muhammad al-Yazîdî *rahimahullâh* said: “I went to [Hârûn] ar-Rashîd *rahimahullâh* and I found him looking at a page which was written with gold. When he saw me, he smiled. I said: ‘Tell me something beneficial, may Allâh ﷻ honour the Amîr al-Mu’minîn.’ He said: ‘Yes, I found these two lines of poetry in one of the treasure chests of the Banû Umayyah. I liked these two lines and added a third line to them.’ He then said the following lines:

إذا سد باب عنك من دون حاجة - فدعه لأخرى يفتح لك بابها
فإن قراب البطن يكفيك ملؤه - ويكفيك سوات الأمور اجتنبها
ولا تك مبدالا لعرضك واجتنب - ركوب المعاصي يجتنبك عقابها

“If one door is shut off to you from fulfilling a need, leave it and turn to another one and its door will be opened for you. It is sufficient for you to fill the receptacle of the stomach and it is sufficient for you to abstain from harmful matters. Do not sacrifice your honour. Abstain from committing sins and their retribution will keep away from you.”

‘Abdullâh ibn Salâm ﷺ asked Ka‘b ﷺ: “What causes knowledge to disappear from the hearts of ‘ulamâ’ after they memorized it and understood it?” He replied: “Covetousness, greed of the soul and going around seeking the fulfilment of needs.” A person asked al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh*: “Explain this statement of Ka‘b to me.” He replied: “A person covets a particular thing and therefore goes in quest of it. This causes his Islam to disappear. As for greed, it refers to the greed of the soul in this and that [in everything]. This is to such an extent that you do not want it to miss anything. And you have a need for this and for that. When that need is fulfilled for you, it pierces your nose and leads you wherever it wills. It takes control of you while you have submitted before it. Therefore, whoever loves you for worldly reasons, you will greet him if you pass by him, and you will visit him when he falls ill. You neither greeted him nor visited him for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. Therefore, if you had no need for him it would have been better for you.”

ON THE MERIT OF THE POOR

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The best of this *ummah* are its poor people. The swiftest to recline in Paradise will be the weak of this *ummah*.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I have two occupations. Whoever loves them, certainly loves me; and whoever abhors them, certainly abhors me. They are poverty and jihâd.”

It is related that Jibra’îl عليه السلام came down to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: “O Muhammad! Allâh ﷻ conveys peace to you and says: ‘Would you like that these mountains be turned into gold and they move about with you wherever you go?’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ lowered his head for some time and then said: ‘O Jibra’îl! This world is the abode for he who has no abode, and wealth for he who has no wealth. The person who has no intelligence accumulates for this world.’ Jibra’îl عليه السلام said to him: ‘O Muhammad! Allâh ﷻ kept you firm with a firm statement.’”

It is related that while ‘Îsâ عليه السلام was travelling, he passed by a man who was sleeping, wrapped in a cloak. So he woke him up and said: “O sleeping person! Stand up and engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.” The man replied: “What do you want from me? I have abandoned this world for its people.” ‘Îsâ عليه السلام said: “In that case, you may sleep, O you who are beloved to me!”

Mûsâ عليه السلام passed by a man sleeping on the ground. There was a brick under his head, his face and beard were in the soil, and he was wrapped in a cloak. Mûsâ عليه السلام said: “O my Sustainer! This servant of Yours is lost in the world.” Allâh ﷻ revealed to Mûsâ عليه السلام saying: “O Mûsâ! Don’t you know that when I look at My servant with My entire countenance, I turn the entire world away from him?”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Poverty is more beautiful for a believer than a beautiful cheekpiece of a horse’s harness on the cheek of a horse.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever gets up in the morning without any physical complaint, completely at peace in his heart, and having sufficient food for his day; then it is as though the world with all its treasures have been given to him.”

Ka‘b al-Ahbâr ؓ said: “Allâh ﷻ said to Mûsâ ؑ: ‘O Mûsâ! When you see poverty approaching, you must say: ‘Welcome to the salient feature of the righteous.’”

‘Atâ’ al-Khurâsânî *rahimahullâh* said: “A Prophet passed by on the sea shore when he saw a person fishing. The fisherman said: ‘In the name of Allâh’, and flung his net into the water but did not catch any fish. The Prophet then passed by another fisherman who said: ‘In the name of Satan’, and flung his net into the water. He caught so many fish that he had to bend backwards on account of the heavy weight of the net. The Prophet said: ‘O my Sustainer! What is the meaning of this, and I know fully well that everything is in Your control?’ Allâh ﷻ said to the angels: ‘Expose to My servant the abode of these two fishermen.’ When he saw the lofty and honourable position that He prepared for the first one and the disgrace and humiliation that He prepared for the second one, he said: ‘I am satisfied, O my Sustainer!’”

Our Prophet ﷺ said: “I peeked into Paradise and saw that the majority of its inhabitants were the poor. I peeked into Hell-fire and saw that the majority of its inmates were the wealthy and women.” Another Hadîth states: “I saw that the majority of the inmates of the Hell-fire were women. So I asked: ‘What did they do?’ I was told: ‘They were preoccupied with gold and saffron.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The gift of a believer in this world is poverty.” A narration states: “The last Prophet to enter Paradise will be Sulaymân ibn Dâ’ûd ؑ because of the mighty kingdom which he possessed. And the last of my Companions to enter Paradise will be ‘Abdur

Rahmân ibn ‘Auf ؓ because of his wealth.” Another Hadîth states: “I saw him crawling into Paradise.”

‘Îsâ ؑ said: “The wealthy person will enter Paradise with difficulty.” Another narration from the family of the Prophet ﷺ states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When Allâh ﷻ loves a servant, He puts him through trials and tribulations. And when He loves him profusely, He purchases him.” He was asked: “What is the meaning of purchasing him?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ leaves no family and no wealth for him.”

A Tradition states: “When you see poverty approaching, say: ‘Welcome to the salient feature of the righteous.’ And when you see wealth approaching, say: ‘It is an evil whose consequences have been brought forward.’”

Mûsâ ؑ asked: “O my Sustainer! Tell me who are Your beloved ones from Your creation so that I may also love them because of Your love for them?” Allâh ﷻ replied: “Every poor poor person.” It is possible that the second “poor” is brought for emphasis or it could refer to the poor who is in very dire circumstances.

‘Îsâ ؑ said: “I love poverty and I abhor prosperity.” From all the names that he used to be addressed with, he loved to be called: “O poor person!” the most.

The Arab leaders and wealthy ones said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: “Set aside a day for us and a separate day for them. When they come to you, we will not come. When we come to you, they should not come.” These wealthy people were referring to some of the poor Companions like Bilâl ؓ, Salmân ؓ, Suhayb ؓ, Abû Dharr ؓ, Khabbâb ibn al-Aratt ؓ, ‘Ammâr ibn Yâsir ؓ, Abû Hurayrah ؓ, and other members of the Suffah who were very poor. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ accepted this proposal [of the wealthy ones] because they complained to him about the smell that emanated from the bodies of these poor Companions due to their wearing coarse clothing in the intense heat. When they perspired, the smell

emanated from their clothes. This did not appeal to the wealthy ones, viz. al-Aqra‘ ibn Hâbis at-Tamîmî, ‘Uyaynah ibn Hisn al-Fazârî, ‘Abbâs ibn Mirdâs as-Sulamî, and others. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ accepted this suggestion that he will not combine both groups in the same assembly. Consequently, Allâh ﷻ revealed the following verse

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعُدْوَةِ وَالْعَشيِّ
يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ ۖ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ
وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ قَرْطًا وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ فَمَنْ شَاءَ
فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفِرْ

“Keep yourself with those who invoke their Sustainer morning and evening, seeking His countenance. Let not your eyes overlook them, seeking the adornment of this worldly life. Pay no heed to the one whose heart We have rendered heedless of Our remembrance, who follows his own lusts and whose case exceeds all bounds. Say: ‘The truth is from your Sustainer.’ Then whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve.” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 28-29)

On one occasion, Ibn Umm Maktûm ؓ [a poor Companion] sought permission to come to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ while there was a nobleman from the Quraysh with the latter. This displeased the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Consequently, Allâh ﷻ revealed the following verses:

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَىٰ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ نَعْلُهُ
يَرَىٰ أَوْ يَذْكُرُ فَنُفَعُهُ الذُّكْرَىٰ

“He frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man. What do you know? Perhaps he will purify himself. Or he may have pondered and the pondering may have benefited him.” (Sûrah ‘Abasa, 80: 1-4)

أَمَّا مَنْ اسْتَغْنَىٰ فَأَنَّ لَهُ تَصَدَّىٰ

“As for he [the unbeliever] who could not bother, you are concerned about him.” (Sûrah ‘Abasa, 80: 5-6)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Endeavour to recognize the poor and take them by their hands for they have wealth.” The Companions asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What wealth do they have?” He replied: “On the day of resurrection it will be said to them: ‘Look for those who fed you a piece of bread, who gave you a sip of drink or clothed you with a garment, take him by his hand and continue with him towards Paradise.’”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “I entered Paradise and heard some movement in front of me. When I looked, I saw that it was Bilâl ؓ. When I looked at the upper levels of Paradise, I saw the poor people of my *ummah* and their children. When I looked at the lower levels of Paradise, I saw a few rich people and women. So I asked: ‘O my Sustainer! What is it with them?’ Allâh ﷻ replied: ‘As for the women, gold and silk have been to their disadvantage. As for the rich people, they were preoccupied in making lengthy calculations.’ I then searched for my Companions and I did not see ‘Abdur Rahmân ibn ‘Auf. He then came to me crying. I asked him: ‘What kept you behind from me?’ He replied: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! I could not reach you till I met those who have gone grey and I thought that I will not see you.’ I asked: ‘And why is that?’ He replied: ‘I was calculating my wealth.’”

Now look at this! ‘Abdur Rahmân ؓ is from among the senior and early Companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He is from among those ten Companions who were given the glad tidings of Paradise. He is from among those wealthy ones regarding whom the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Except he who distributes his wealth like this and like this.” [Referring to spending very generously in the cause of Allâh ﷻ]. Despite all this, he was harmed by wealth to such an extent.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went to a poor person and saw nothing by him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: "If the light of this one person was distributed among the people of this world, it will encompass all of them."

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Should I not inform you about the kings of Paradise?" The Companions replied: "Indeed, O Messenger of Allâh!" He said: "Every weak person, who is regarded as weak by people, who is dusty and dishevelled, who is wearing just two tattered garments, no one pays any attention to him. Were he to take an oath in the name of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ will fulfil his oath."

‘Imrân ibn Husayn ؓ said: "I held a lofty and reputable position in the eyes of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He said to me: "O ‘Imrân! You hold a lofty and reputable position in my eyes. Would you like to join me in order to visit Fâtimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ?" I replied: "Indeed, O Messenger of Allâh! May my parents be sacrificed for you." He stood up and I stood up with him. We continued till he stood at the door of Fâtimah. He knocked on the door and said: "Peace be on you! Can I come in?" She replied: "You may come in, O Messenger of Allâh!" He said: "Can I come in with whoever is with me?" She replied: "Who is with you, O Messenger of Allâh?" He replied: "‘Imrân." ‘Imrân ؓ says: "Fâtimah then said: 'I take an oath by that Being who sent you as a Prophet with the truth, I am wearing nothing but a cloak [which is not covering me completely].'" He ﷺ said: "Do this..." and he showed her with his hands. She said: "My body is now covered but what about my head?" He ﷺ threw a worn out sheet which was on his body to her and said: "Wrap it around your head." She then permitted him to enter. He went in and said: "*As salâm ‘alaykum*, O my beloved daughter? How was your morning?" She replied: "By Allâh, I got up with a pain and my pain has now increased because of what I am experiencing: I cannot get any food to eat and hunger is causing me more harm." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ began crying and said to her: "Do not be terrified, O my daughter! By Allâh, I have not tasted any food for the last three days, despite being more honourable in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than you. If I were to ask my Sustainer, He would have fed me. However, I have given preference to the hereafter over this world." He then placed his hand

on her shoulder and said: “Glad tidings to you, you are certainly the leader of the women of Paradise.” She asked: “And where will Âsiyah, the wife of Pharaoh, and Maryam bint ‘Imrân be?” He ﷺ replied: “Âsiyah is the leader of the women of her world. And Maryam is the leader of the women of her world. You are the leader of the women of your world. You will all be in houses of gold and silver thread. There will be no difficulty, no shouting and no fatigue in these houses.” He ﷺ then said to her: “Remain content with your cousin [your husband, ‘Alî ﷺ] for I have certainly got you married to a leader in this world and a leader in the hereafter.”

It is related by ‘Alî ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When people begin hating their poor ones, when they display the buildings of this world, and they fight with each other like dogs over the acquisition of wealth, then Allâh ﷻ strikes them with four things: (1) drought through the ravages of time, (2) oppression from the rulers, (3) treachery from the ministers of the rulers, (4) power given to their enemies.”

Abû ad-Dardâ’ ﷺ said: “The person who owns two dirhams will be kept confined more severely or will be taken to account more severely than the person who owns one dirham.”

‘Umar ﷺ sent 1000 dinars to Sa‘îd ibn ‘Âmir ﷺ. He went home sad and grief stricken. His wife asked him: “Did something happen?” He replied: “Far more serious than that.” He then said: “Show me your worn out blouse.” He tore it into pieces and made them into money purses and distributed them [with the money]. He then stood up to offer salâh and continued crying till the next morning. He then said: “I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘The poor people from my *ummah* shall enter Paradise 500 years before the wealthy ones. A wealthy person will try to join the group of poor people [in order to gain early entry into Paradise] but he will be held by his hand and expelled from that group.’”

It is said that a poor person came to the assembly of ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* so the latter said to him: “Come closer. If you were a wealthy person I would not have brought you close to me.” The wealthy companions of ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* would desire to be poor because of

his profuse attachment to the poor ones and his turning his attention away from the wealthy. Al-Mu'ammil *rahimahullâh* said: "I have not seen a wealthy person more dishonoured than in the assembly of ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh*. And I have not seen a poor person more honoured than in the assembly of ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh*."

A wise man said: "I feel sorry for man. If he only feared the Hell-fire as he fears poverty, he would be saved from both [Hell-fire and poverty]. If he were to desire Paradise as he desires affluence, he would acquire both of them. Were he to fear Allâh ﷻ internally as he fears His creation outwardly, he would enjoy happiness in both worlds."

Ibn 'Abbâs ؓ said: "Cursed is that person who considers affluence to be an honour and poverty to be a disgrace."

Luqmân ؑ said to his son: "Do not look down on someone because of his worn out clothing for surely your Sustainer and his Sustainer is the same."

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh *rahimahullâh* said: "Your love for the poor is from among the traits of the Messengers, your giving preference to sitting in their company is from among the signs of the righteous, and your fleeing from their companionship is from among the signs of the hypocrites."

It is related in the Traditions from previous Books that Allâh ﷻ addressed one of His Prophets ﷺ saying: "Beware of My making you loathsome and you thus fall from My grace by My pouring the world profusely upon you."

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* used to distribute 100 000 dirhams in a single day which used to be sent to her by Mu'âwiyah ؓ, Ibn 'Âmir and others. She used to distribute this amount of money despite her own blouse having patches. [Once when she distributed this huge amount of money to the poor], her slave woman said to her: "Why did you not purchase some meat for one dirham with which you could have opened your fast?" She was fasting on that day. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* replied: "Had you reminded me [when I was distributing that money], I would have bought some meat." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had advised her thus: "If you wish to join me

[in the hereafter], you should impose the life of the poor over yourself, you should abstain from sitting in the company of the rich people, and you should not discard your blouse till you have patched it.”





A person came to Ibrâhîm ibn Adham *rahimahullâh* with 10 000 dirhams. He refused to accept this money. The person insisted that he take it. Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* said to him: “Do you want me to wipe out my name from the register of the poor for 10 000 dirhams? I will never ever do that.” May Allâh ﷻ be pleased with him.



The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to the person who is guided towards Islam, who has sufficient means for a living and is content with it.”





The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O group of poor people! Give Allâh ﷻ your pleasure from your hearts and you will acquire the reward for your poverty. If not, [in other words, if you are not pleased with your poverty], you will not acquire the reward for your poverty.” So the best is for a person to be content with what he has. Better than this is to be happy with what he has.


It is understood from this that a person who is covetous will not be rewarded for his poverty. However, the general nature of the merits of poverty mentioned in the Traditions show that even such a person [a poor person who is covetous] will also be rewarded. It is possible that the displeasure that is mentioned in the above Hadîth refers to the person’s dislike of Allâh’s ﷻ action in keeping this material world away from him. At times, a person who is desirous of wealth does not harbour any ill-feeling or dislike against Allâh ﷻ for having decreed poverty for him. But the previously mentioned dislike [and displeasure] is the one that causes loss of rewards.




It is narrated from ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Everything has a key. The key to Paradise is love for the poor and needy because of their patience. They [the poor and needy] shall be sitting in the company of Allâh ﷻ on the day of resurrection.”



It is narrated from ‘Alî  that the Prophet  said: “The most beloved of people in the sight of Allâh  is the poor person who is content with his sustenance, pleased with Allâh .



The Prophet  used to make the following supplication: “O Allâh! Make the basic sustenance of the family of Muhammad sufficient.” The Prophet  said: “On the day of resurrection, every person – rich and poor – would wish that he had been given just his basic sustenance in the world.”


Allâh  addressed Ismâ‘îl  saying: “Seek Me among those whose hearts are broken.” Ismâ‘îl  asked: “And who are they?” Allâh  replied: “They are the truthful poor people.”

The Prophet  said: “There isn’t anyone superior to a poor person if he is pleased [with his poverty].”

The Prophet  said: “Allâh  will say on the day of resurrection: ‘Where are the choicest people from My creation?’ The angels will ask: ‘Who are they, O our Sustainer?’ Allâh  will reply: ‘They are the poor Muslims, who were content with what I gave them, pleased with what I decreed [for them]. Admit them into Paradise.’ They will enter Paradise and be engrossed in eating and drinking while the rest of the people will still be uncertain in their reckoning [of deeds].”

There are many Traditions with regard to being pleased and content with what Allâh  has decreed. It is clear that contentment is the opposite of covetousness [and greed]. ‘Umar  said: “Covetousness is poverty and to forgo is affluence. The person who forgoes what people possess and is content [with what he has] is independent of people [and not in need of them].”



Ibn Mas‘ûd  said: “Every single day, an angel from beneath the Throne announces: ‘O progeny of Âdam! A little that suffices you is better than a lot that causes you to transgress [the injunctions of Allâh .

Abû ad-Dardâ'  said: "Every person has a defect in his intellect. This is because when the world comes to him with more, he rejoices and is happy, while the day and night are continuously destroying his life. Yet this does not bother him in the least. How unfortunate is man! Of what benefit is wealth that increases while his life is decreasing?!"

A wise man was asked: "What is the meaning of affluence?" He replied: "Your having few desires and being content with what is sufficient for you."

It is said that Ibrâhîm ibn Adham *rahimahullâh* was a wealthy person of Khurâsân. One day he was watching from the top of his palace into the courtyard. He saw a man with a piece of bread which he was eating. After eating that piece of bread, the man slept away. Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* said to one of his servants: "When this man wakes up, bring him to me." When the man woke up, he was brought before Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh*. Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* said: "O man! You ate that piece of bread when you were hungry?" He replied: "Yes." Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* asked: "Are you full?" He replied: "Yes." Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* asked: "Did you sleep well after that?" He replied: "Yes." Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* thought to himself: "What am I going to do with [all the riches] of the world when a soul can be satisfied with so little?"

A person passed by 'Âmir ibn 'Abd al-Qays *rahimahullâh* while the latter was eating salt and herbs. The man said to him: "O servant of Allâh! Are you satisfied with just this from this world?" He replied: "Shall I inform you of something worse than this?" The man said: "Most certainly." 'Âmir *rahimahullâh* said: "The person who is satisfied with this world in place of the hereafter."

Muhammad ibn Wâsi' *rahimahullâh* used to take dry bread, dip it in water and eat it with salt. He used to say: "Whoever is content with this from this world will never be in need of anyone." Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: "Allâh  cursed a people who, despite Allâh  having taken an oath, still do not believe Him. He then recited the following verse:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ. فَزَرَبَ السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ

“In the heavens is your sustenance, and whatever you have been promised. By the oath of the Sustainer of the heavens and the earth! This is the very truth just as you are speaking.” (Sûrah adh-Dhâriyât, 51: 22-23)

One day, Abû Dharr رضي الله عنه was sitting with some people when his wife came to him and said: “Are you sitting with all these people when there is absolutely nothing in the house?” He replied: “There is an insurmountable obstacle before us. None except he who is fearful will be able to save himself from it.” She returned pleased with his reply.

Dhû an-Nûn *rahimahullâh* said: “The person who is closest to unbelief is a poor person who has no patience.”

A wise person was asked: “What is your wealth?” He replied: “Beautifying myself externally, being equitable internally, and renouncing what people possess.”

It is related that Allâh ﷻ said in one of the previously revealed Books: “O progeny of Âdam! Even if you possessed the entire world, you would have enjoyed nothing from it except the barest amount of food. Since I have already provided you with this amount of food and made the reckoning thereof to others, I have been extremely kind to you.”

The following is said with regard to contentment:

إِضْرِعْ إِلَى اللَّهِ لَا تَضْرِعْ إِلَى النَّاسِ - وَاقْنَعْ بِيَأْسٍ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّ فِي الْيَأْسِ

وَاسْتَغْنِ عَنِ ذِي قَرْبَى وَذِي رَحِمٍ - إِنَّ الْغِنَى مِنْ اسْتِغْنَى عَنِ النَّاسِ

“Submit yourself before Allâh ﷻ and not before people. Be content with renunciation, for honour lies in renunciation. Remain independent of your close associates and relatives. A truly rich person is he who is independent of people.”

The following is also said in this regard:

يا جامعاً مانعاً والدهر يرمقه - مقدراً أيّ باب منه يغلقه
مفكراً كيف تأتيه منيته - أغادياً أم بها يسري فتطرقه
جمعت مالا فقل لي هل جمعت له - يا جامع المال أيا ما تفرقه
المال عندك مخزون لوارثه - ما المال مالك إلا يوم تنفقه
أرفه بهال فتى يغدو على ثقة - أن الذي قسم الأرزاق يرزقه
فالعرض منه مصون ما يدنسّه - والوجه منه جديد ليس يخلقه
إن القناعة من يحلل بساحتها - لم يلق في ظلها همّاً يؤرقه

“O you who are amassing [this world] and refusing [to give of it] while time is watching him and checking which door it will shut upon him. Thinking as to how his death will come to him. Will it come in the morning or take him away in the evening? You have amassed wealth. Now tell me, O you who has amassed wealth, did you amass day for it which you will have to eventually leave? The wealth that you have is actually stored for the inheritors. Your wealth is not your wealth except on the day when you spend it. The most pleasant life is that of a person who has the full conviction that the Being who distributes sustenance will provide for him as well. His honour is protected, without being tainted. His face is luminous, without being worn out. Whoever descends onto the field of contentment will never experience in its shade any worry that would cause him sleepless nights.”

ON TAKING A FRIEND APART FROM ALLÂH I

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَلَا تَرْكَبُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ

“Do not incline towards the wrongdoers or else the fire will afflict you.”
(Sûrah Hûd, 11: 113)

Some commentators say that the linguists are unanimous in explaining that “inclination” in this context refers to any level of tendency and inclination whether it be insignificant or significant. ‘Ikramah *rahimahullâh* says that the prohibition of inclination towards the wrongdoers means that we should not even feign or pretend any inclination towards them. The obvious meaning of this verse is the prohibition of inclining towards the polytheists and the sinful Muslims.

In explaining this verse, an-Naysâbûrî *rahimahullâh* says: “The scholars say that the “inclination” that is prohibited refers to being pleased with what the wrongdoers are doing, speaking well of them and their ways to others, or joining them in any of their wrongs. As for joining their ranks in order to repulse some of their evil or attracting them towards good, then this is not included in “inclination” to them.” An-Naysâbûrî *rahimahullâh* adds: “I say that this is with regard to one’s livelihood and as a concession. However, *taqwâ* demands that we remain totally aloof from them.” Allâh ﷻ says:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

“Is Allâh not sufficient for His servant?” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 36)

I [al-Ghazzâlî] say: He is correct. To totally sever the essence of inclination towards them is preferable, especially in these times in which it is not possible to prohibit an evil and command good. This is more so when inclination towards them amounts to deception. If inclination towards he

who has a bit of wrong could lead to one being afflicted by the Hell-fire, what do you think will be the position of he who totally inclines towards those who are engrossed in wrong and disobedience, who destroys himself in their companionship, who throws himself in their friendship and intermingling with them, who is delighted at beautifying himself with their ways of dress, who casts his eyes at their fleeting splendour, and who is jealous of the low pickings of life which they have been given?! In reality, he is more insignificant than a seed and lighter than the wing of a mosquito. He should be discarded without the hearts ever inclining towards him. The one who seeks such inclination and the one who is sought are both weak. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person is considered to be on the *Dîn* of he whom he befriends. You should therefore see who you befriend.”

It is narrated in a Tradition: “The similitude of a righteous companion is like that of a person carrying musk. If he does not give you any of it, you will still enjoy its fragrance. The similitude of an evil companion is like that of a person working the bellows. If he does not burn you, the smoke of the bellows will certainly affect you.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ
اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا، وَإِنْ أَوْهَرَ الْبُيُوتُ لَبِثُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ

“The similitude of those who take protectors apart from Allâh is like that of a spider which builds a house [for itself]: surely the weakest of houses is the spider’s house.” (Sûrah al-‘Ankabût, 29: 41)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who respects a wealthy person because of his wealth has in fact destroyed two thirds of his *Dîn*.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When an open sinner (*fâsiq*) is praised, Allâh ﷻ becomes angry and the Throne trembles.” Allâh ﷻ says:

يَوْمَ نَدْعُو كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ

“The day when We shall summon each group together with its imâm.”
(Sûrah al-Isrâ'/Banî Isrâ'îl, 17: 71)

This verse refers to the summoning of each group in the court of Allâh ﷻ on the day of resurrection.

The commentators of the Qur'ân differ with regard to specifying the “imâm” with whom each group will be summoned. Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ and others are of the opinion that it refers to the book in which the deeds of each and every person are recorded. In other words, each person will be summoned together with his book of deeds. This opinion is supported by the following verse:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ

“As for him who is given his book [of deeds] in his right hand...” (Sûrah al-Hâqqah, 69: 19)

Ibn Zayd *rahimahullâh* says: The word “imâm” refers to the revealed Book [of Allâh ﷻ]. It is therefore said: ‘O people of the Taurâh, O people of the Injîl, O people of the Qur'ân.’” Mujâhid*rahimahullâh* and Qatâdah *rahimahullâh* say: “The ‘imam of each group’ refers to their Prophet. It would therefore be said [on the day of resurrection]: Summon the followers of Ibrâhîm ؑ, summon the followers of Mûsâ ؑ, summon the followers of ‘Îsâ ؑ, summon the followers of Muhammad ﷺ.” ‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ؓ says: “The ‘imâm’ that is referred to is the imâm of each era. The people of each era will therefore be summoned together with their imâm whose orders they used to follow and whose prohibitions they used to abstain from.

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When Allâh ﷻ gathers all the past and latter nations on the day of resurrection, a flag will be raised for every treacherous person. It will then be announced: ‘This is the treachery of so and so person who is the son of so and so person.’”

Imâm Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate on the authority of Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said the following in explaining this verse: “A person will be summoned, he will be given his book [of deeds] in his right hand, his body will be given a height of 60 feet, his face will be illuminated, and a glittering crown of pearls will be placed on his head. He will then proceed towards his companions who will see him from a distance. They will say: ‘O Allâh! Give us this and bless us in it.’ They will continue saying this till he reaches them. [On reaching them], he will say: ‘Glad tidings to you. Each one of you will receive the same thing.’ As for the unbeliever, his face will be blackened, his body will be given a height of 60 feet in the form of a human, and he will be made to wear a crown. His companions will see him from a distance and say: ‘We seek refuge in Allâh from this evil. O Allâh! Do not let this come to us.’ He will come to them and they will say: ‘O Allâh! Disgrace him.’ He will reply: ‘May Allâh distance you [from His mercy]! Each one of you will receive the same thing.’”

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا، وَأُخْرِجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا، وَقَالَ
الْإِنْسَانُ مَا هَٰذَا. يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا، بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا.
يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ، فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ، وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ.

“When the earth is shaken with its quaking. When the earth brings forth its burden from within. And man asks: ‘What has happened to it?’ On that day it shall recount its tidings. Because your Sustainer will have ordered it. On that day, people shall proceed in different groups so that they may be shown their deeds. Whoever does an atom’s weight of good shall see it. Whoever does an atom’s weight of evil shall see it.” (Sûrah az-Zalzalah, sûrah 99))

Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه says: “In other words, the earth will be shaken from its bowels and all the dead and buried treasures that are lying in its belly will be brought out.”

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ recited the words:

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا

And asked: “Do you know what its tidings are?” The Companions replied: “Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ know best.” He ﷺ said: “Its tidings are that it will bear testimony against every male and female with regard to every deed that was done on its surface.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be mindful of the earth for it is your source. Surely whatever every single person does on it – whether good or bad – it will inform [Allâh ﷻ] thereof.” Narrated by at-Tabarânî.

ON THE BLOWING OF THE TRUMPET, THE TERROR, AND RISING UP FROM THE GRAVES

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “How can I enjoy myself when the angel appointed to blow the trumpet has already placed the horn in his mouth, inclined his forehead, and is listening attentively, waiting for the order to be given so that he may blow the trumpet?!”

Muqâtil *rahimahullâh* says: The trumpet is the horn. Isrâfil عليه السلام has placed his mouth on the horn which is in the shape of a trumpet. The circumference of the head of the horn is like the width of the heavens and the earth. He is looking intently towards the ‘Arsh, waiting for the order so that he may blow it the first time. When he blows it, all those who are in the heavens and the earth will fall unconscious. In other words, every animal will die out of this terror, except for those whom Allâh ﷻ willed [not to die]. And they are Jibra’îl عليه السلام, Mîkâ’îl عليه السلام, Isrâfil عليه السلام and the angel of death. Allâh ﷻ will then order the angel of death to take away the soul of Jibra’îl عليه السلام, Mîkâ’îl عليه السلام and Isrâfil عليه السلام. An order will then be issued against the angel of death and he will also die. After this first blowing of the trumpet, the entire creation will remain in the *Barzakh* for 40 years. Allâh ﷻ will then bring Isrâfil عليه السلام to life and order him to blow the trumpet for a second time.

Allâh ﷻ says:

تَمَّ نُفُوحٌ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنْظُرُونَ

“It will then be blown a second time, and they will immediately stand up, looking all around.” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 68)

They will stand on their feet looking at the resurrection.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The angel appointed to blow the trumpet has come and placed the trumpet in his mouth. He has placed one foot forward and moved one foot back, waiting for the order to blow the trumpet. You should therefore fear the blowing the trumpet.”

Ponder over the submission and surrender of the entire creation and their submission at the time of the resurrection, out of fear of the awful cry of the trumpet and on account of waiting for the passing of the judgement on them as to whether they will be fortunate [to go to heaven] or whether they are doomed [to the Hell-fire]. You yourself will be among them – in submission just as they will be in submission, and you will be at a loss just as they will be at a loss. This will be your position even if you were from among the affluent and wealthy people of this world. On that day, the kings of this world will be the most disgraced, the smallest and the most insignificant of people. They will be trampled upon just as tiny particles are trampled upon.

At such a time, the wild animals will come forth from the jungles and the mountains will be overturned. They will all be intermixed with the creation after having been separate. They will all be submissive for the day of resurrection without any wrong having polluted them. Rather, their rising will be due to the terrifying screech and the terror of the blowing of the trumpet. All this will engross them to such an extent that they will forget to flee from the creation and to remain aloof from them.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ

“When the wild beasts are brought together.” (Sûrah at-Takwîr, 81: 5)

Thereafter, Satan and the rebellious ones will come forward despite their rebelliousness and defiance. They will be subdued and humbled because of their terror in being presented before Allâh ﷻ.

Allâh ﷻ says:

فَوَرَبُّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ ثُمَّ لَنَقْضُرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا

“So by your Sustainer, We shall gather them together and the Satans [as well]. We shall then gather them around Hell, fallen on their knees.” (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 68)

Now just ponder over your condition at that time and in what state your heart will be. Then look at how they will be herded after the resurrection - bare-footed, naked, uncircumcised – towards the field of resurrection which is white and completely bare, without any crookedness in it. No elevated places are found in it behind which a person could conceal himself. Nor does it have any shallow places wherein a person could conceal himself from being spotted. Rather it is one single, flat plain. People will be herded towards it in groups.

Glory to Allâh ﷻ who gathered all the creations despite the differences in their categories, from various parts of the world, when He herded them through the first blowing of the trumpet, followed by the second blowing. It will only be right for the hearts to be trembling on that day and for the eyes to be downcast.

Allâh ﷻ says:

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

“The day when this earth will be replaced by another earth, and the heavens will be replaced, and the people will appear before Allâh, the one, the powerful.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 48)

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ says: “There will be an increase and decrease in the earth. Its trees, mountains, valleys and everything else in it will be removed. The entire surface of the earth will be stretched. It will be white like silver. No blood will be shed on it and no evil will be committed on it. As for the heavens, the sun, moon and stars will be removed from them.”

O you poor person! Look at the terror of that day and its severity. When all the creations gather on this field, the stars of the sky will be scattered from

above them, the sun and moon will be destroyed, and the earth will be in darkness because its light has been extinguished. While they are in this state, the sky will revolve above their heads and, despite its thickness and strength, it will be split for 500 years. The angels will be standing on its edges and sides. How terrifying that sound will be to your ears when the sky is split! How terrifying that day will be when the sky will be split despite its strength and might! It will then gush and flow like melted silver, mixed with a yellow colour. It will thus become red like tanned leather. The sky will be like molten copper and the mountains will be like dyed wool. The people will disperse like scattered insects and they will be walking bare-footed and naked.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The people will be raised bare-footed, naked and uncircumcised. Their perspiration will seal them and it would have reached their ear lobes.” Saudahradiyallâhu ‘anhâ, the wife of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, says: “I asked: O Messenger of Allâh! What a terrible scene, we will be looking at each other [while we are naked]?!” He replied: “The people will be too occupied to look at each other.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ

“For each one of them on that day will have enough concern of his own.”
(Sûrah ‘Abasa, 80: 37)

Imagine how serious that day will be when the private parts will be exposed and people will still feel safe from being looked at or any one turning towards them! How will they look at others when they will be crawling on the stomachs? They will not be able to turn around to look at anyone. Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The people will be raised on the day of resurrection in three groups: riding, walking and on their faces.” A person asked: “How will they walk on their faces?” He replied: “The Being who enabled them to walk on their feet can make them walk on their faces.”

It is the nature of man to reject everything that he does not know [or is not accustomed to]. If man did not see a snake moving so swiftly on its belly, he would have rejected the possibility of walking on anything apart from the feet. The ability to walk on feet is also considered far-fetched for those who have not witnessed that. You should therefore be cautious of rejecting any of the astonishing things that are going to happen on the day of resurrection merely because they are against the norms of this world. Even if you did not witness some of the astonishing things of this world, you would certainly reject them before having witnessed them. Now imagine yourself standing naked, completely exposed, disgraced, repelled, astonished, dumbfounded, waiting for the decision to be passed whether you are fortunate [to gain admission into Paradise] or wretched [to be cast into the Hell-fire]. Now consider this condition to be extremely serious for it is certainly serious.

Then ponder over the crowds of people and their getting together. This crowd will be to such an extent that all the inhabitants of the seven heavens and the seven earths – the angels, the jinn, humans, Satan, the animals, the birds – will all crowd together. The sun will then shine on them after its heat has been multiplied and its appearance has been changed. It will be brought close to the heads of the creation – as close as the distance of the two ends of a bow. There will be no shade except the shade of the Throne (*'Arsh*) of Allâh ﷻ. None but those who are close to Allâh ﷻ will be able to benefit from this shade.

There will therefore be he who is enjoying the shade of the Throne and he who is exposed to the heat of the sun. The sun would have melted him by its heat. His pain and agony will be very intense on account of its blazing heat. The creation will then crowd into each other and push each other because of the big multitude and the stampede. Add to this the severe shame and disgrace they will suffer because of their disgrace and humiliation when they present themselves before the Almighty.

The blazing heat of the sun, the heat of the breathing, and the burning of the hearts will all join with the fire of shame and fear. Perspiration will therefore flow from every hair. It will flow to such an extent that it will flow onto the plain of resurrection. The level of this perspiration will then

rise against their bodies in accordance with their position in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. There are those whose perspiration will rise till their knees, those till their hips, those till their ear lobes and those who will almost disappear in that perspiration.

Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The day people will stand before the Lord of the worlds till some of them will disappear in their perspiration which will be till their ear lobes.”

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “People will perspire on the day of resurrection to such an extent that their perspiration will go into the ground to a depth of 70 fathoms (one fathom equals six feet or 1.829 metres). It will then seal their mouths and reach till their ears.” As narrated by Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* in their *Sahîh*.

Another Hadîth states that the people will be standing with their eyes staring blankly at the sky for 40 years. The severity of this situation will cause their perspiration to seal their mouths. ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Âmir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The sun will come close to the earth on the day of resurrection. People will therefore perspire. There will be those whose perspiration will reach till their heels, those till half their shanks, those till their knees, those till their thighs, those till their hips, those till their mouths – he then demonstrated with his hands and sealed his mouth – and there will be those who will be completely covered in perspiration – he then demonstrated this by striking his head with his hand.”

Now just ponder over the perspiration of the people on the plain of resurrection and their terrible agony. There will be from among them he who will call out: “O my Sustainer! Give me some rest from this agony and some respite even if it means going into the fire [to get this respite].” All this will happen without their having faced the reckoning [of their deeds] as yet nor the punishment. You will be one of them. You do not know to what level that perspiration will reach you.

You should know that every perspiration that did not come out due to fatigue in the cause of Allâh ﷻ either through performing hajj, waging jihâd, fasting, offering salâh, going to see to the needs of a Muslim, bearing difficulties in commanding good and forbidding evil – then shame and fear on the field of resurrection will cause all this perspiration to come out. And this agony will be for a very lengthy time. If man is safe from ignorance and deception, he will know that his perspiration in bearing the pains of obedience is much easier and much shorter than the perspiration of the agony and waiting that he will suffer on the day of resurrection. This is because this is a day whose severity is very intense and whose time is very lengthy.

ON THE PASSING OF JUDGEMENT ON THE CREATION

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Do you know who a bankrupt person is?” We replied: “O Rasûlullâh! A bankrupt person among us is he who has no dirham, no dînâr and no possessions.” He said: “A bankrupt person from my *ummah* is he who will come on the day of resurrection with salâh, fasting and zakâh, while he had sworn this person, wrongly accused this person, devoured the wealth of this person, shed the blood of this person, and struck this person. This person will be given from his good deeds, and this person will be given from his good deeds. If his good deeds are finished before he can fulfil his dues, their sins will be taken and flung onto him. He will then be flung into the Hell-fire.”

Now look at your misery on a day like this! When no good deed will save you from the tribulation of showing off and the traps of Satan. If just a single good deed is safe after every lengthy time, your claimants will rush towards it and take it away. Perhaps if you take an account of yourself while you are consistent in fasting by day and spending the night in worship, you will realize that no day comes to an end without your tongue having indulged in backbiting Muslims to such an extent that all your good deeds are in vain. Now what about the rest of the evils like devouring unlawful and doubtful things, and displaying shortcomings in acts of obedience?! How can you hope for salvation from the wrongs [which you committed] on a day when even a horn-less animal will take retribution from a horned animal?!

Abû Dharr رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw two sheep butting one another. He said: “O Abû Dharr! Do you know why they are butting one another?” I replied: “No.” He said: “But Allâh ﷻ knows. And He will pass judgement between them on the day of resurrection.”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said with regard to these words of Allâh ﷻ:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُنْثِيَ لَهُ أَثْمَالُكُمْ

“There is not a one walking on the earth nor any bird flying with its two wings but are communities like yourselves.” (Sûrah al-An‘âm, 6: 38).

He said: “The entire creation will be raised on the day of resurrection: the animals, the insects, the birds, and everything else. The justice of Allâh ﷻ will be such that He will take retribution from a horned animal on behalf of a horn-less animal. He will then say: ‘You may all turn into soil now.’ It is at that time that the unbeliever will say: ‘If only I was also turned into soil.’”

What will you do, O pauper, on that day when you see your register devoid of good deeds whereas you had fatigued yourself for lengthy periods in doing them? You will ask: “Where are all my good deeds?” A reply will be given: “They have been transferred to the records of your claimants.” You will see your record loaded with evil deeds, whereas you had exercised patience for lengthy periods in abstaining from them and you endured severe hardship on account of abstaining from them. You will ask: “O my Sustainer! I never committed these evils.” A reply will be given: “These are the evils of the people whom you had back-bited, swore, intended evil against, and whom you had wronged in business transactions, in being neighbours, in addressing them, in arguing with them, in discussing with them, in studying with them, and in all other categories of social relationships.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Satan has given up hope of idols being worshipped in Arab lands. However, he will be pleased with you’ll committing anything that is less than that. They are the evils that would cause one’s destruction. You should therefore abstain from wrong as much as you can. For surely a person will come on the day of resurrection with acts of obedience that are as huge as mountains. He will think that they will save him. Person after person will come and say: ‘O my Sustainer! Such and such person committed a certain wrong against me.’ Allâh ﷻ will say: ‘Wipe off from his record of good deeds.’ This will continue till nothing of his good deeds remains.”

A similitude in this regard is like that of a group of travellers who stopped over in a deserted place. They have no firewood. They disperse in search of

firewood. They obtain some firewood and in a short while they have a blazing fire. They cook whatever they like. [Soon that fire is reduced to ashes]. Similar is the case with sins.

When this verse was revealed:

إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ مَيِّتُونَ، ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ

“Without doubt you also have to die and they will also die. Then you all will certainly dispute before your Sustainer.” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 30-31)

Az-Zubayr رضي الله عنه said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Will we be made to bear the specific sins that we committed on each other in the world?” He replied: “Yes. You will be made to bear them till you fulfil the dues that you owe to each person.” Az-Zubayr رضي الله عنه said: “By Allâh, this is a very serious situation.”

You should therefore consider that day to be very serious when no step will be pardoned, when not even a slap will be overlooked, and no word will be forgiven till the person who was wronged takes retribution from the person who wronged him.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: “Allâh ﷻ will resurrect the people naked, dusty and *buhman*.” We asked: “What is the meaning of *buhman*.” He replied: “They will have nothing with them.” Their Sustainer will then call to them in a voice that will be heard from a distance just as it will be heard from nearby, saying: “I am the king. I am the sovereign. None from the inhabitants of Paradise may enter Paradise while someone from the inmates of the Hell-fire has a case against him, until I take retribution from him. None from the inmates of the Hell-fire may enter the Hell-fire while someone from the inhabitants of Paradise has a case against him, until I take retribution from him.” Even to the extent of a single slap. We asked: “How is it when we will go before Allâh ﷻ naked, dusty and empty handed?” He ﷺ replied: “You will go with good deeds and evil deeds. So fear Allâh, O servants of Allâh! And fear wronging the people by way of seizing their wealth, dishonouring them, constricting their lives, and ill-treating them. For surely that which is specifically between a

person and Allâh ﷻ, forgiveness for it is very swift. The person who has committed many wrongs and repented from them, and it is difficult for him to absolve himself from those whom he wronged, then he should engage in abundant good deeds in preparation for the day of retribution. He should secretly do some good deeds which are between himself and Allâh ﷻ with total sincerity, in such a way that no one comes to know of them except Allâh ﷻ. It is possible that this will bring him close to Allâh ﷻ and he will thereby earn His benevolence which He stored for His beloved believers in order to repulse the wrongs of people from them.

Anas ؓ narrates: While the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was sitting, we saw him laughing to the extent that his teeth were exposed. ‘Umar ؓ asked: “May my parents be sacrificed for you. Why are you laughing, O Rasûlullâh?” He replied: “Two men from my *ummah* kneeled before Allâh ﷻ. One of them said: ‘O my Sustainer! Take retribution on my behalf from my brother for the wrong that was inflicted on me.’ Allâh ﷻ said: ‘Give to your brother for the wrong that was inflicted on him.’ He replied: ‘O my Sustainer! Nothing is left of my good deeds.’ Allâh ﷻ said to the one who made the request: ‘What are you going to do now that he has no good deeds left?’ He replied: ‘O my Sustainer! He must carry my burden of evil deeds.’ The narrator says: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷻ began crying.” He then said: “That is going to be a very serious day. A day when people will need their burden of evil deeds to be removed from them.” Allâh ﷻ then said to the one who made the request: ‘Raise your head and look into the gardens.’ He raised his head and said: ‘O my Sustainer! I see lofty cities of silver and mansions of gold that are adorned with pearls. For which Prophet are these? Or for which *siddîq* (a title given to the one who remains truthful, e.g. Abû Bakr ؓ) are these? Or for which martyr are these?’ Allâh ﷻ replied: ‘It is for the one who gives Me the price.’ He asked: ‘O my Sustainer! Who is so rich as to have its price?’ Allâh ﷻ said: ‘You possess it.’ He asked: ‘What is it?’ Allâh ﷻ replied: ‘Your pardoning your brother.’ He said: ‘O my Sustainer! I have pardoned him.’ Allâh ﷻ said: ‘Hold your brother by his hand and take him to Paradise.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said:

“Fear Allâh and reconcile among yourselves, for surely Allâh ﷻ reconciles among the believers.”

This is a notice that this can be attained by adopting the characteristics of Allâh ﷻ, viz. reconciling among ourselves, and all other characteristics. Now ponder in yourself that if your record is clear of all wrongs, or that He is so benevolent to you that He pardons you, and you are convinced of eternal bliss, how happy you will be when you present yourself for the detailed judgement while the robe of honour has been conferred to you and you return with happiness after which there is no misery, and with bounty that is not surrounded by destruction. It is at that time that your heart will fly with happiness and rejoicing. Your face will glitter and beam as the radiance of the full moon. You will walk proudly among the creations, raising your head. Your back will be devoid of the burden of sins. The splendour of enjoyment and the coolness of pleasure will glitter from your forehead and all the past and latter generations will look at you and at your condition. They will envy your beauty and handsomeness. The angels will be walking in front of you and behind you. They will announce before everyone, saying: “This is such and such person who is the son of such and such person. Allâh ﷻ is most pleased with him. He has achieved such fortune after which he will never experience any misery.”

Do you think that this position is not greater than the one that you acquire in the hearts of the creation in this world through your showing off, your flattery, your pretension and your preening yourself? If you have realized that it is better than this, that in fact there is no comparison between the two, then endeavour to acquire this position through pure devotion and genuine intention in your relationship with Allâh ﷻ. For you will never acquire that except through Him. But if it is the second thing in which you find yourself, and we seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from this, in the sense that there appears on your record a crime which you considered to be insignificant, while it is very serious in the sight of Allâh ﷻ, and He therefore detests you because of it, and says to you: “My curse be on you, O slave of evil! I do not accept your worship from you.” No sooner you hear this announcement, your face will turn dark and the angels will become angry with you on account of Allâh’s anger with you. They will say: “Our

curses be on you and the curses of all the creations be on you.” The Zabâniyah [94] will then throng around you, having become angry with you because their Creator is angry with you. They will advance towards you with their sternness, meanness and their fearsome expressions. They will grab you by your forelocks and drag you on your face in front of all the creations. They will all look at your disgraceful appearance and your humiliation. You will burst out into loud laments and they will say: “Do not burst out into just one lament but burst out into numerous laments.” The angels will announce: “This is such and such person who is the son of such and such person. Allâh ﷻ has exposed his disgraceful and sinful acts, and cursed him on account of his evil deeds. He will therefore experience wretchedness after which he will never experience any fortune.”

At times this may be on account of a sin which you committed in private – concealed from the servants of Allâh ﷻ, in the quest for a lofty position in their hearts, or out of fear of being disgraced before them. So how ignorant you are that you are wary of being disgraced before a small group of Allâh’s servants in this fleeting world, yet you do not fear the great disgrace before that huge assembly [on the day of resurrection] together with having to face the wrath and painful punishment of Allâh ﷻ. The whips will be in the hands of the Zabâniyah, herding you towards the blazing fire. So these are your conditions and you have not perceived the danger as yet.

ON THE DISAPPROVAL OF WEALTH

Allâh ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ،
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

“O believers! Let not your wealth and your children make you oblivious to the remembrance of Allâh. Whoever does this, it is such people who are in loss.” (Sûrah al-Munâfiqûn, 63: 9)

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

“Your wealth and your children are but a test. Whereas with Allâh there is a great reward.” (Sûrah at-Taghâbun, 64:15)

He who gives preference to his wealth and children over that which is with Allâh ﷻ has in fact fallen into very severe loss. Allâh ﷻ says:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ
أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يَبْخَسُونَ

“Whoever desires the life of this world and its beauty, We shall dispense to them their actions in this world and there shall be no loss for them therein.” (Sûrah Hûd, 11: 15)

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِكَبَّارٍ، أَنْ رَأَهُ اسْتَعْتَى

“No such thing! Man transgresses from this that he considers himself to be self-sufficient.” (Sûrah al-‘Alaq, 96: 6-7)

أَلَمْ تَكُنْ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ

“The greed for more and more has kept you heedless.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 1)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The love for wealth and honour causes hypocrisy to grow in the heart just as water causes plants to grow.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Two ferocious wolves that are set free among a flock of sheep cannot cause more destruction than the destruction caused to the religion of a Muslim by the love for wealth, honour and fame.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The wealthy ones are destroyed except he who does like this and like this [95] among the servants of Allâh ﷺ. And there are very few wealthy ones like this.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who from your *ummah* are the worst?” He replied: “The wealthy ones.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There will come after you such people who will devour the exotic things of this world and different varieties thereof. They will mount swift horses and different pedigrees thereof. They will marry the most beautiful women and different types thereof. They will wear the most beautiful clothes and different varieties thereof. They will have bellies that are not satisfied with a little, and souls that are not content with a lot. They are obsessed by the world and go in its quest morning and evening. They have taken the world as a deity apart from Allâh ﷻ and as a lord apart from Allâh ﷻ. They consider the world to be the be all and the end all, and they follow their lusts in it. This is a stern warning from Muhammad ibn ‘Abdillâh ﷺ that whoever experiences that time, be it from your progenies and those that follow them, that he should not greet such people, he should not visit their sick, he should not attend their funeral, and he should not show any respect to their seniors. Whoever does any of this, then he has in fact helped in the destruction of Islam.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Leave the world to its people. He who takes from the world more than what is sufficient for him, is actually

bringing about his own destruction without even perceiving it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Man says: ‘This is my wealth, this is my wealth.’ Do you possess of your wealth except that which you ate and digested, that which you wore and wore-out, or that which you gave in charity and passed on?”

A man asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! How is it that I do not like death?” He replied: “Do you have any wealth?” The man said: “Yes, O Rasûlullâh!” He said: “Give your wealth away because the heart of a believer is with his wealth. If he gives it away, he would love to meet Allâh ﷻ. But if he holds back his wealth, he would love to remain behind with it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The companions of man are three: one follows him till his soul is taken away, the second one follows him till his grave, the third one follows him till his resurrection. As for the one that follows him till his soul is taken away, it is his wealth. The one that follows him till his grave is his family. The one that follows him till his resurrection is his deeds.”

Salmân al-Fârisî ؓ wrote to Abû ad-Dardâ' ؓ thus: “Beware of accumulating of the world that for which you do not give thanks. I have certainly heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘The person of the world who used to obey Allâh ﷻ will be brought forward with his wealth in front of him. Every time the *Sirât* (the bridge that every person has to cross in the hereafter) turns him around, his wealth will say to him, ‘You may continue because you fulfilled the rights of Allâh ﷻ with regard to me.’ The person of the world who did not obey Allâh ﷻ will be brought forward with his wealth on his shoulders. Every time the *Sirât* turns him around, his wealth will say to him: ‘Destruction to you, why did you not fulfil the rights of Allâh ﷻ with regard to me?’ This will continue till he calls out for destruction and laments.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person dies, the angels ask ‘What has he sent forward [for himself]?’ And the people ask: ‘What has he

left behind [for us]?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not own lands for you will love this world.”

It is related that a person was abusive towards Abû ad-Dardâ' ؓ and treated him badly. So he said: “O Allâh! Whoever does evil to me, give him a healthy body, a long life and abundant wealth.” Now look how he considered the abundance of wealth as the height of misery despite having a healthy body and a long life. This is because it [abundance of wealth] will certainly prompt him towards transgression.

‘Alî ؓ placed a dirham in his own palm and said to it: “Listen! As long as you do not go away from me, you will not benefit me.”

It is related that ‘Umar ؓ sent to Zaynab bint Jahsh *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* her stipend. She asked: “What is this?” They said: “‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ sent it for you.” She said: “May Allâh ﷻ forgive him.” She then removed a curtain which she had, cut it into pieces and stitched those pieces into purses. She placed that money into those purses and distributed them among the members of her household, her relatives and her orphan girls. She then raised her hand and supplicated thus: “O Allâh! Let not the stipend of ‘Umar find me after this year.” [Her supplication was accepted] and she was thus the first of the wives of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to join him [in death].

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “By Allâh, no one valued a dirham without Allâh ﷻ disgracing him.” It is said that the first time the dînâr and the dirham was minted, Satan raised them and then placed them on his forehead. He then kissed them and said: “Whoever loves you both is most certainly my slave.”

Samî‘ ibn ‘Ajlân said: “The dînârs and dirhams are the bridles of the hypocrites by which they will be herded into the Hell-fire.”

Yahyâ ibn Mu‘âdh said: “The dirham is a scorpion. If you do not know its incantation, do not take it. Because if it stings you, its poison will kill you.”

He was asked: “What is its incantation?” He replied: “Taking it from lawful sources and spending it in rightful avenues.”

Al-‘Alâ’ ibn Ziyâd said: “The world was portrayed before me while having every adornment on it. So I said: ‘I seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from your evil.’ It said: ‘If you would like Allâh ﷻ to give you refuge from me, you must detest the dirham and the dînâr.’” This is because the dînâr and dirham both comprise the entire world – it is through them that all the different things of the world are acquired. He who restrains himself from them has restrained himself from the world. It is in this regard that a poet says:

إني وجدت فلا تظنوا غيره – أن التورع عند هذا الدرهم
فإذا قدرت عليه ثم تركته – فاعلم بأن تقاك تقوى المسلم

“I have experienced – and you should therefore not think otherwise – that piety is by this dirham. If you have acquired it and then abandoned it, you should know that the piety of a Muslim has protected you [from love for it].”

لا يغرنك من المرء قميص رقعته – أو إزار فوق عظم الساق منه رفعه
أو جبين لاح فيه أثر قد خلعه – أره الدرهم تعرف حبه أو ورعه

“Do not let a patched shirt of a person deceive you. Or the fact that he has raised his lower garment above his ankle. Or the fact that his forehead is radiant with the mark of prostration which he disowns. Rather, show him a dirham, and then you will recognize his love [for this world] or his piety.”

It is related with regard to Maslamah ibn ‘Abd al-Malik that he went to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* at the time of the latter’s death. He said: “O Leader of the Believers! You did something which none before you did. You left your children without any dirham and dînâr.” He had 13 children. ‘Umar*rahimahullâh* said: “Make me sit up.” The people made him sit up. He then said: “As for your statement that I did not leave any dirham or dînâr for them, I certainly did not deprive them of their right and I did not give what was theirs to someone else. My children are either of the two:

(1) one who is obedient to Allâh ﷻ - and so Allâh ﷻ will suffice for him, and Allâh ﷻ protects the righteous, (2) one who is disobedient to Allâh ﷻ, and I am not concerned over what happens to him.”

It is related that Muhammad ibn Ka‘b al-Qurazî obtained a lot of wealth. Someone said to him: “You should save some of it for your children after you.” He replied: “No. Instead, I will save it for myself by my Sustainer and I will save my Sustainer for my children.”

It is related that a man said to Abû ‘Abd Rabbihi: “O my brother! Do not depart with evil while you leave your children with good.” So Abû ‘Abd Rabbihi gave away 100 000 dirhams from his wealth.


Yahyâ ibn Mu‘âdh said: “There are two calamities which the past and latter generations did not hear the like thereof with regard to a person’s wealth at the time of his death.” He was asked: “What are they?” He said: “All his wealth is taken away [by others] while he will be questioned about all his wealth”

ON DEEDS, THE SCALE, AND THE PUNISHMENT OF THE HELL-FIRE








O my brother! Do not be unmindful of thinking about the scale [of deeds] and the scattering of the books [of deeds] to the right and left. After the questioning, the people will be in three groups: (1) A group that has no good deeds whatsoever. A black neck will appear from the Hell-fire and peck at them just as a bird pecks at seeds. It will twist around them and cast them into the Hell-fire. The Hell-fire will swallow them. An announcement will be made to them: “Wretchedness after which there is no happiness.” (2) A group that has no evil whatsoever. An announcer will call out: “Those who used to praise Allâh ﷻ under every condition may stand up.” They will stand up and proceed towards Paradise. The same procedure will be followed with those who used to spend the night in worship, then those whom the trade of the world did not preoccupy from the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. An announcement will be made to them: “Happiness after which there is no wretchedness.” (3) A third group will remain. This will comprise the largest number of people. They were the ones who did good deeds together with evil deeds. It may be concealed to them but it will not be concealed to Allâh ﷻ as to whether their good deeds are more or their evil deeds are more. However, Allâh ﷻ will certainly expose this to them in order to demonstrate His bounty in the case of pardoning, and His justice in the case of punishing. The scrolls and books comprising the good and evil deeds will be scattered. The scale [of deeds] will be placed. The eyes will stare at the books [of deeds] to see whether they are placed on the right side or on the left side. They will then look at the point of the scale to see whether it is inclining towards the evil deeds or the good deeds. This will be a very terrifying situation in which the creations will lose their senses.

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* narrated that the head of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was resting on the lap of ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*. He then fell asleep. She thought about the hereafter and began crying to such an extent that her tears fell on his cheek. He woke up and asked: “Why are you

crying, O ‘Â’ishah?” She replied: “I thought of the hereafter. Will we think of our families on the day of resurrection?” He replied: “I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life that on three occasions a person will think of no one except his self: (1) When the scales are placed and the deeds are weighed so that man can see whether his scale is light or heavy. (2) When the books [of deeds] are presented so that man can see whether his book is taken towards the right or towards the left. (3) When a person has to cross the *Sirât*.”

Anas  said: Man will be brought on the day of resurrection and made to stand in front of the two pans of the scale. An angel will be appointed over him. If his scale is heavy, the angel will announce in a voice that will be heard by all the creations: “Such and such person is most fortunate. He will never experience wretchedness hereafter.” If his scale is light, the angel will announce in a voice that will be heard by all the creations: “Such and such person is most wretched. He will never experience happiness hereafter.”

When the pan of good deeds is light, the Zabâniyah advance with rods of iron while wearing clothes of fire. They then take the one who is the share of the Hell-fire towards the Hell-fire.

The Messenger of Allâh  said with regard to the day of resurrection: “It is the day on which Allâh  will call out to Âdam  and say to him: ‘Stand up, O Âdam, and send the delegation of the Hell-fire.’ He will ask: “‘How many should there be in the delegation of the Hell-fire?’ Allâh  will reply: ‘Nine hundred and ninety nine from every one thousand.’ When the Companions y heard that, they were dumbfounded and could not even smile. When the Messenger of Allâh  saw his Companions y in this state, he said: “Continue doing good and take glad tidings. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is the life of Muhammad, you certainly have two creatures which no one ever had. We shall certainly be more than those who passed away from the progeny of Âdam  and the progeny of Satan.” The Companions y asked: “What are those two creatures, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “Ya’jûj and Mu’jûj (Gog and Magog).” [On hearing this], the Companions y regained their composure. The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Continue doing good and take glad tidings. I

take an oath by that Being in whose control is the life of Muhammad that on the day of resurrection you will only be like a mole on the side of a camel or like a small outgrowth on the arm of an animal.”

O you who are unmindful of his self! Who is deceived by the preoccupations of this world which is bound to come to an end! Give up worrying about that which you are going to depart from and occupy your thoughts in your destination. You have certainly been informed that the Hell-fire is the destination of all. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا ثُمَّ
نُجِّى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثًّا

“There isn’t anyone among you who will not pass through it. This is a promise upon your Sustainer – inevitable, absolute. We shall then save those who continued fearing [Us] and leave the sinners in it, fallen on their knees.” (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 71-72)

So you are certain that you will pass through it. But you are not sure whether you will be saved from it or not. Now just try and imagine the terrifying experience of having to pass through the Hell-fire. Perhaps you will make preparations to save yourself from it. Ponder over the condition of the creations while they have gauged the calamities of the resurrection. While they are in its afflictions and miseries, waiting for the real news and the intercession of intercessors, when all of a sudden pits of darkness encompass the criminals and a blazing fire towers above them. They hear its sighing and rumbling noise all of which portray the severity of its anger and rage. It is at that time that the criminals will be convinced of destruction and all the nations will fall to their knees. Even the obedient ones will fear an evil destination. An announcer from the Zabâniyah will appear, saying: “Where is such and such person, the son of such and such person? Where is the person who had been procrastinating in the world by having long hopes and who was wasting his life in evil deeds?” They will then rush towards him with rods of iron and advance towards him with severe threats. They will herd him towards the severe punishment and fling him headlong into

the pit of Hell. They will say to him: “Taste the punishment. You are most honoured, noble.”

They will live in an abode that is very constricted, whose paths are pitch dark, and whose destructive places are not known. The prisoners will remain therein forever and the fire will be ignited therein. There drink therein will be boiling water while their abode will be the blazing fire. The Zabâniyah will strike them and the Hâwiyah will gather them. All their hopes will be bound to ruin. And there will be no liberation for them. Their feet will be tied to their foreheads and their faces will become black through the darkness of their sins. They will call out from the sides of Hell, and they will shout out from its edges: “O Mâlik! The threat has been enforced on us. O Mâlik! The steel has weighed down on us. O Mâlik! Our skins have been torn apart from us. O Mâlik! Take us out from it. We will not repeat our sins.”

The Zabâniyah will say: “This is impossible. There is no coming out for you from the abode of humiliation. Remain disgraced therein and do not talk to us. If you are taken out from it, you will go back to doing what you were prohibited from doing.” It is then that they will despair and express remorse over their excesses against Allâh ﷻ. Remorse will not rescue them, nor will regret be of any avail to them. Instead, they will be flung on their faces with their hands tied. The fire will be above them, below them, to their right and to their left. They will thus be drowning in the fire. Their food will be the fire, their drink will be the fire, their clothes will be the fire, and their beds will be the fire. They will be between folds of fire, in shirts of pitch, struck by iron rods and in heavy chains. They will rattle in its constricted places, they will be shattered in its depths, and they will tremble in its calamities. The fire will boil them like a pot placed on a fire. They will cry out for destruction and ruin. Every time they cry out in laments, boiling water will be poured from above their heads. It will melt their skins and all that is in their bellies. Iron rods will strike their foreheads. Consequently, pus will gush forth from their mouths. Their livers will be severed out of thirst. The pupils of their eyes will flow onto their cheeks. The flesh of their cheeks will fall off. The hairs will be plucked out from the sides. In fact, the skins will be torn apart. Every time their skins get burnt, they will be replaced with new skins. The bones will be devoid of flesh.

The souls will be left with mere veins and tissues. They will boil in the heat of those fires. Together with all this, they will hope for death, but they will not die.

What will your position be when you look at them with their faces gone pitch black because of the boiling water, with their eyes gone blind, their tongues gone dumb, their backs broken, their bones split, their ears cut off, their flesh torn apart, their hands tied behind their necks, their forelocks joined to their feet, when they will be walking on the fire with their faces, trampling on spikes of steel with the pupils of their eyes?? The flames of the fire would have gone into their internal organs, while the serpents and scorpions of Hâwiyah will be stinging their external parts. These are just a few of their general conditions. Now look at the details of their conditions and also ponder over the valleys and crevices of Hell.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “There are 70 000 valleys in Hell. Every valley has 70 000 crevices. Every crevice has 70 000 serpents and 70 000 scorpions. The unbeliever and hypocrite will have to go through every single one of these.”

‘Alî ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from the well of grief or the valley of grief.” He was asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is the valley or well of grief?” He replied: “It is a valley in Hell from which Hell itself seeks refuge 70 times daily. Allâh ﷻ prepared this valley for those who recite the Qur’ân for show.”

So this is the extent of Hell and the branching out of its valleys. It is equivalent to the valleys of the world. The number of its doors is equal to the number of the seven parts of the body by which a person disobeys Allâh ﷻ. They are one above the other. The highest is known as *Jahannam*, this is followed by *Saqar*, then *Lazâ*, then *al-Hutamah*, then *as-Sa’îr*, then *al-Jahîm* and then *al-Hâwiyah*.

Now look at the depth of *al-Hâwiyah*. There is no limit to its depth just as there is no limit to the desires in this world. Just as a desire of this world does not end, and instead leads towards a desire greater than the former, in

like manner the depth of an abyss of Hell does not end but leads towards an abyss deeper than the former.

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates: We were with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when we heard a tremor. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Do you’ll know what this is?” We replied: “Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ know best.” He said: “It is rock that was cast into Hell 70 years ago. It only reached the bottom now.”

Now look at the levels. The hereafter has greater levels and is far more superior. Just as the occupation of the people with the world differs: you get a person who is completely immersed in it like a drowning person while another person delves into it till a certain limit, in like manner, the Hell-fire’s devouring them will be different. Allâh ﷻ does not wrong anyone even equal to an atom’s weight. The different forms of punishment will therefore not be the same on every person who is in the Hell-fire. Instead, there will be a certain limit for each person in accordance with his disobedience and sins. However, if the world with all its treasures was presented to the person who is receiving the least punishment, he will give all of it as ransom in order to free himself from the severity that he is experiencing. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The inmate of Hell receiving the least punishment on the day of resurrection will be wearing a pair of sandals of fire. His brains will boil from the heat of his sandals.”

If this is the case with the person who is receiving a lenient punishment, just ponder over the person who will be receiving a severe punishment. No matter how much you doubt the severity of the punishment of the fire, take your finger closer and closer to a fire, and then calculate accordingly. And then you can conclude that you are wrong in your calculation. This is because there is no comparison between the fire of this world and the fire of Hell. However, since the severest punishment in this world is that of this fire, you can gauge the punishment of Hell from it.

If the inmates of Hell found a fire like the fire of this world, they would dive willingly into it in order to flee from the fire in which they are. It is stated in some traditions that the fire of this world was washed with 70

waters of mercy so that the people of this world could endure it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ explicitly described the fire of Hell. He said: “Allâh ﷻ ordered that the Hell-fire be ignited for 1000 years till it turned red. It was then ignited for another 1000 years till it turned white. It was then ignited for another 1000 years till it turned black. It is thus black and pitch dark.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hell-fire complained to its Sustainer saying: ‘O my Sustainer! Part of me has devoured the other part [because of the intense heat].’ So Allâh ﷻ permitted it to take two breaths, one in winter and one in summer. The severest heat that you experience in summer is from its heat. And the severest cold that you experience in winter is from its bitter cold.”

Anas ibn Mâlik ؓ said: “The unbeliever who enjoyed the most comforts in this world will be brought forward. An order will be issued that he be dipped in the Hell-fire for a very short while. He will then be asked: ‘Did you ever experience any comfort?’ He will say: ‘No.’ The person who experienced the most difficulties and hardships in this world will be brought forward. An order will be issued that he be dipped in Paradise for a very short while. He will then be asked: ‘Did you ever experience any difficulty?’ He will say: ‘No.’”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ said: “If there were 100 000 or more people in a masjid, and a person from the inmates of Hell were to breathe out, they would all die.” Some ‘ulamâ’ have said with regard to this verse: “The fire will scorch their faces and they will remain disfigured therein” [96], it will merely scorch them once and it will leave behind no flesh on their bones without it having flung it behind them.

After this, look at the stench of the pus that will flow from their bodies to the extent that they will drown in it. Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a bucket of pus from Hell were to be thrown onto earth, the entire population of earth will stink. This is the drink that they will be given when they shout out of thirst. One of them will be made to drink water of pus. He will take it in gulps but will be unable to

swallow it. Death will come to him from every side but he will not die. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَإِنْ يَسْتَعْجِلُوْا يُعَاتُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوْهَ ط
يُسْ الشَّرَابُ ط وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَقًا

“If they ask for help, they will be given water like pus which would scald the faces. What a dreadful drink and what an evil resting place!” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 29)

Then look at their food which is called zaqqûm.

Allâh ﷻ says:

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَنتَھَا الضَّالُّوْنَ الْمُكَذِّبُوْنَ، لَا كُلُوْا مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِّنْ زُقُوْمٍ،
فَمَا لَقَوْنَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُوْنَ فَشَارِبُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيْمِ، فَشَارِبُوْنَ شَرِبَ الْحَمِيْمِ

“Then, O you who have gone astray, who are the rejecters, you shall certainly eat of the zaqqûm tree. You will then fill your bellies with it. You will then drink boiling water over it. You will drink just as thirsty camels drink.” (Sûrah al-Wâq‘ah, 56: 51-55)

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْحَمِيْمِ، طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُؤُوسُ الشَّيَاطِيْنِ،
فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا كُلُوْا مِنْهَا فَمَا لَقَوْنَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُوْنَ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا
لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيْمٍ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرْجِعَهُمْ إِلَى الْحَمِيْمِ.

“It is a tree that grows in the nethermost part of Hell. Its spikes are like the heads of devils. They will certainly eat of it and fill their stomachs therewith. Then on top of that they shall have a brew of boiling water. Then their return is to the Hell fire.” (Sûrah as-Saffât, 37:64-68)

تُصَلَّى نَارًا حَامِيَةً، تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ آتِيَةٍ

“Falling into a blazing fire. Given to drink from a boiling spring.” (Sûrah al-Ghâshiyah, 88: 4-5)

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَجَحِيمًا، وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

“Surely We have shackles [to bind them] and a blazing fire. And food that chokes in the throat and a painful punishment.” (Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 12-13)

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a single drop from zaqqûm were to fall into the oceans of the world, it would destroy the livelihoods of the inhabitants of earth. What, then, will be the case when it will be their food?” Anas ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Yearn for those things which Allâh ﷻ encouraged you towards, and be wary of and fearful of those things which Allâh ﷻ threatened you with be it His punishment, His torment, or Hell. Surely if a drop of Paradise were with you in this world in which you are, it would make this entire world fragrant for you. And if a drop of Hell were with you in this world in which you are, it would make this entire world nauseating for you.”

Abû ad-Dardâ’ ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The inmates of Hell will be cast with hunger to such an extent that the pangs of hunger will be equal to the actual punishment that they are suffering. They will cry out for food. They will be given a thorny plant which will neither nourish nor satisfy the hunger. They will cry out for food again. They will be given a food that chokes in the throat. Then they will remember that when they were in the world and they got choked, they used to drink a liquid to relieve the choking. So they will ask for a drink. Boiling water will be raised above them with steel hooks. When they are lowered towards them, their faces will become grilled. When the drink enters their bellies, it will cut everything that is inside. They will say to each other, call the guards of Hell. They will then call out to the guards of Hell saying: “Call on your Sustainer to give us one day’s relief from the punishment.” The guards will

reply: “Didn’t your Messengers come to you with clear signs?” They will reply: “Indeed.” The guards will say: “Continue shouting. The supplications of the unbelievers are of no avail.”

They will then say to each other: “Call Mâlik.” They will call out to him, saying: “O Mâlik! Tell your Sustainer to put an end to us.” He will reply: “You are to remain [here forever].” Al-A‘mashrahimahullâh said: “I have been informed that from the time that they call out to Mâlik till he replies to them will be 1000 years.” They will then say to each other: “Call on your Sustainer directly because there is no one better than Him.” They will say: “O our Sustainer! Our wretchedness has got the better of us and we were a people who were astray. Remove us from it, and if we repeat these sins, we will certainly be of the wrongdoers.” He will reply: “Remain therein in shame and do not speak to Me.” [97] It is then that they will become totally despondent of any goodness. And they will start shouting, expressing remorse and crying out.

Abû Umâmah  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said with regard to these words of Allâh :

وَيُسْقَى مِنْ مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ يَنْجُرُّهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِيعُهُ

“and he will be made to drink water of pus. He takes it in gulps but is unable to swallow it.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 16-17)

“It will be brought close to him and he will express his displeasure with it. When it is brought closer to him, it will grill his face and his scalp will fall off. When he drinks it, it will cut his intestines till it comes out of his anus.”

Allâh  says:

وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ

“and are given to drink boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels.” (Sûrah Muhammad, 47: 15)

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَإِنْ يَسْتَعْجِلُوا يَغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهُ

“If they ask for help, they will be given water like pus which would scald the faces” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 29)

So this is going to be their food and drink when they feel hungry and thirsty.

Now look at the serpents and scorpions of Hell, at their venomous poison, at their huge size, and at their terrifying appearance. They will be let loose on the inmates of Hell and will remain closely attached to them. They will therefore not stop biting and stinging them for a single moment.

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He to whom Allâh ﷻ blessed with wealth and he did not pay its zakâh, then a baldheaded serpent having two small black spots above its eyes will appear before him and strangle him on the day of resurrection. It will then grasp him by his jaws and say: ‘I am your wealth, I am your treasure.’” He then recited this verse:

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ط
بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ط سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا كَانُوا بِهَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Those who are miserly with that which Allâh has given them through His grace should not think that this miserliness is good for them. Instead, it is extremely evil for them. That wealth in which they are miserly will be made into a necklace and hung around their necks on the day of resurrection.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 180)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The Hell-fire has snakes which are as thick as the necks of camels. When they bite just once, the heat thereof will be felt for 40 years. It has scorpions as large as donkeys. When they bite just once, the heat thereof will be felt for 40 years.”

These snakes and scorpions will be imposed on the person who was controlled by stinginess, bad character and taunting people in this world. He who was safeguarded from these evil traits will be safeguarded from these snakes and they will not appear before him.

After all this, ponder over the massive bodies that the inmates of Hell will have. Allâh ﷻ will increase the width and height of their bodies so that their punishment will increase because of this. They will therefore continuously perceive the blaze of the fire and the biting of the scorpions and snakes with all parts of their body at once.

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The molar tooth of the unbeliever in the Hell-fire will be as huge as Mt. Uhud and the thickness of his skin will be a journey of three days.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “His lower lip will fall to his chest while his upper lip will be retracted in such a way that it will cover his face.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The unbeliever will drag his tongue on the day of resurrection and the people will trample on it.”

Despite the huge size of the bodies, the fire will burn them repeatedly and their skins and flesh will be repeatedly renewed. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said with regard to these words of Allâh ﷻ:

كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا

“When their skins get burnt up, We will change their skins for other skins.”
(Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 56)

He said: “The Hell-fire will devour them 70 000 times daily. Each time it devours them, it will be said to them: ‘Return [to your original appearance].’ And they will return.”

Now ponder over the crying and shouting of the inmates of Hell, their calls for destruction and their laments. All this will be imposed on them the moment they are cast into the Hell-fire. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hell will be brought on that day. It will have 70 000 reins. Each rein will

be held by 70 000 angels.” Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Crying will be let free on the inmates of Hell. They will cry till all the tears are finished. They will then cry blood to such an extent that furrows will be seen on their faces. If ships were sent into those furrows, they will sail. They will continue crying, shouting, screaming, calling out for destruction, and lamenting. They will try to get some consolation from all this, but they will be prevented from that as well.

Muhammad ibn Ka‘b *rahimahullâh* said: “The inmates of Hell will make five supplications. Allâh ﷻ will respond to four of them. When they make the fifth supplication, they will never speak again. They will say:

رَبَّنَا أَمَتْنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ وَأُحْيَيْنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَى خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ

“They will say: ‘O our Sustainer! You have caused us to die twice and You gave us life twice. We now confess our sins. Now is there any way out [for us]?’”

Allâh ﷻ will reply by saying:

ذَلِكُمْ بِأَنَّهُ إِذَا دُعِيَ اللَّهُ وَخَلَهُ كَفَرْتُمْ وَإِنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ تُؤْمِنُوا فَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْكَبِيرِ

“This has befallen you because when Allâh alone used to be invoked, you used to reject. And if partners were ascribed to Him, you used to believe. Now judgement rests with Allâh alone, the most high, the supreme.” (Sûrah Ghâfir/al-Mu‘min, 40: 11,12)

They will then say: “O our Sustainer! We have seen and heard. Now send us back so that we may do some good.”

Allâh ﷻ will reply:

أَوَلَمْ تَكُونُوا أَقْسَمْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ زَوَالٍ

“Did you not take an oath previously that there will be no removal for you [from this world]?” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 44)

They will say: “O our Sustainer! Remove us from here, we will do good deeds. Not what we used to do [when we were in the world].”

Allâh ﷻ will reply:

أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُمْ مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ،
فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ

“Did We not grant you a life so that whoever was to ponder could ponder therein? And a warner had come to you! Now taste [the punishment]. There is no helper for the sinners.” (Sûrah Fâtir, 35: 37)

They will say: “O Sustainer! Our wretchedness overwhelmed us and we remained a deviated people. O our Sustainer! Remove us from it. Then if we revert [to sinning], we are certainly sinners.”

Allâh ﷻ will reply:

اِخْسَعُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ

“Remain therein in shame and do not speak to Me.” (Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 108)

They will never speak after this. And this will be the severest intensity of the punishment.

Mâlik ibn Anas *rahimahullâh* narrates that Zayd ibn Aslam *rahimahullâh* said the following with regard to these words of Allâh ﷻ:

سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجْرَعْنَا أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِنْ مَّخِصٍ

“It is now the same to us whether we are impatient or patient – there is no escape for us.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 21)

He said: "They will exercise patience for 100 years. They will then show their impatience for 100 years. They will then exercise patience for 100 years. They will then show their impatience for 100 years. They will then say: 'It is now the same to us whether we are impatient or patient.'"

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Death will be brought forward on the day of resurrection in the shape of a beautiful sheep. It will be slaughtered between Paradise and Hell. An announcement will be made: 'O people of Paradise! There is life for eternity without death. And O people of Hell! There is life of eternity without death.'"

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: "A man will come out from the Hell-fire after 1000 years. If only I knew that person." Al-Hasan ؓ was seen sitting in a corner and crying. He was asked the reason for his crying. He replied: "I fear Allâh ﷻ casting me into the Hell-fire without even bothering."

So this is the gist of the different forms of punishment of Hell. As for the details concerning its sorrows, griefs, regrets, etc. there is no limit to all this. The most serious of all matters, together with the severe punishment that they will receive, is the regret of missing out on the bounties of Paradise, missing out on meeting Allâh ﷻ, and missing out on His pleasure. This, together with the fact that they sold all this for a few dirhams, in the sense that they sold all this for trivial pleasures in the world for a few days. Moreover, these pleasures were such that they were not pure. Rather, they were impure and filthy.

They will say to themselves: "O how sorrowful! How we destroyed ourselves by disobeying our Sustainer! How we did not impose patience upon ourselves for a few days! Had we exercised patience, those days would have passed and we would have now remained in close proximity to the Sustainer of the universe, enjoying His pleasure and delight."

O, look at the remorse of these people when they missed out on all this and have been put through all these punishments. None of the bounties and pleasures of the world remained with them. Had they not witnessed the bounties of Paradise, their remorse would not have been so much. However, the bounties of Paradise will be shown to them. The Messenger of Allâh

ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection, people from the Hell-fire will be brought towards Paradise. When they get close to it, inhale its fragrance, look at its palaces, and see all the other bounties which Allāh ﷻ prepared for the inhabitants of Paradise, an announcement will be made: ‘Turn them away from it, there is no share for them in it.’ They will then return with such regret that none of the past and latter generations experienced such regret. They will say: ‘O our Sustainer! Had You cast us into the Hell-fire before showing us what You showed us of Your rewards and all that You prepared for Your friends, it would have been easier for us [to bear the Hell-fire].’ Allāh ﷻ will reply: ‘That is what I intended for you. When you used to be in privacy, you used to be audacious in committing major sins. But when you used to meet people, you used to act as though you are very humble before Me. You used to display before the people the opposite of what you used to give Me from your hearts. You feared the people but you did not fear Me. You respected the people but you did not respect Me. You gave up sins for people but you did not give them up for Me. So today I will make you taste the painful punishment while making unlawful to you the eternal reward.’”

Ahmad ibn Harb *rahimahullāh* said: “We give preference to the shade over the sun, yet we do not give preference to Paradise over the Hell-fire.”

‘Îsâ ﷺ said: “How many a healthy body, a radiant face and an eloquent tongue will be shouting tomorrow between the different levels of the Hell-fire!”

Dâ’ûd ﷺ said: “O my Allāh! I cannot exercise patience over the heat of Your sun. How will I exercise patience over the heat of Your Hell-fire? I cannot exercise patience over the sound of Your mercy, how will I exercise patience over the sound of Your punishment?”

O you poor one! Look at all these conditions and realize that Allāh ﷻ created the different conditions of the Hell-fire. And that He created people for it – they will not be more or less than the number that He created for it. This is a matter which He already decided upon and is over with. Allāh ﷻ says:

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ ۖ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

“Warn them of the day of remorse when the matter will have been decided. While they are heedless and they do not believe.” (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 39)

This not only refers to the day of resurrection but to the eternity. More distinct than the day of resurrection is the matter that has already been decided. It is therefore extremely astonishing that you laugh, play and occupy yourself in matters of this world while you do not know that the matter has already been decided with regard to you. If you say: “If only I knew what my destination is, what my abode is, where my return is, and what matter has been decided for me?” There is an indication for you with which you can gauge for yourself and on whose account you can verify your hopes, viz. that you look at your conditions and your deeds. For surely everything is expedited for that for which it was created. If the path of good has been made easy for you, take glad tidings for you are far away from the Hell-fire. But if everytime you intend doing good but some impediments engulf you and repulse you from doing it, and if everytime you intend doing evil, the means to do it are made easy for you, then you should realize that the sentence [of Hell] has been passed against you. All this is an indication of your destiny just as rain is an indication that plants will grow and just as smoke is an indication that there is a fire somewhere.

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ، وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ

“Surely the righteous are in Paradise. And surely the sinners are in Hell.” (Sûrah al-Infîtâr, 82: 13, 14)

Now present yourself before these two verses and you will recognize your abode from these two abodes. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

ON THE VIRTUE OF OBEDIENCE

You should know that the obedience of Allâh ﷻ is the essence of all good. Allâh ﷻ urged towards His obedience in numerous verses in His Book. It is for this reason that He sent Messengers so that the people will come out of the darkness of the souls to the light of His cognition. This, so that they may enjoy themselves in the abode of pleasure [Paradise] which is prepared for the righteous. This Paradise is such that no eye has seen, no ear has heard of, and it did not even pass the imagination of any human. People were not created in vain. Rather, to recompense those who did evil, and to reward those who did good with Paradise. Allâh ﷻ is not in need of their obedience. Their disobedience does not harm Him in any way nor do His perfect attributes decrease in any way. If they are too haughty to obey Him, there are those [angels] who remain in His company, glorifying Him by day and night without experiencing any boredom. He who does good, it is for his own benefit. He who does evil, it is to his own detriment. Allâh ﷻ is independent and you [man] are dependent [on Him].

How surprising! One of us purchases a slave and loves that he fulfils the services that are incumbent on him, that he acts judiciously in fulfilling them, that he remains subservient to his master who gained control over him through a paltry and fleeting price, a master who abhors him for a single mistake and becomes angry with him, and who, at times, denies him his stipend, drives him away or sells him. Why, then, can we not obey our real Master [Allâh ﷻ] who created us and gave us a perfect form?! We fall into error equal to the number of rain drops. Despite this, He did not withhold His bounties from us. Nor did He withhold His help which, were it not for it, we would have been destroyed. He has the power to punish us for merely committing a single mistake. However, He gives us respite so that we may repent. He will thus welcome us, forgive us our mistake and conceal our private sins.

An intelligent person thus knows who is most deserving of obedience. He therefore turns to him, and turns his full attention to Him. Each time he

commits a sin, he turns and repents to his Creator. He is not despondent of His mercy. He seeks to gain His love by expressing his gratitude for His bounties. He remains persistent in this in the hope that he will be recorded among the beloveds of Allâh ﷻ. When death comes to him, he is desirous of his Master. And his Master is more desirous of meeting him.

Abû ad-Dardâ' ؓ said to Ka'b ؓ: "Inform me of the most special verse in the Taurâh." He replied: "Allâh ﷻ says: 'The righteous ones have been yearning to meet Me for a very long time. And I am even more desirous of meeting them.'" Ka'b ؓ said: "The following is written next to this verse: 'He who seeks Me will find Me. He who seeks anyone other than Me will not find Me.'" Abû ad-Dardâ' ؓ said: "I testify that I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying that."

It is mentioned in the Traditions of Dâ'ûd ؑ that Allâh ﷻ said: "O Dâ'ûd! Convey to the inhabitants of My earth that I am the beloved of he who loves Me, the sitting companion of he who sits with Me, the intimate of he who finds intimacy in My remembrance, the companion of he who seeks My companionship, the chosen one for he who chooses Me, and the obedient one for he who is obedient to Me. No person loves Me with full conviction in his heart without My accepting him for My self. And I love him so intensely that no one else from My creation surpasses him. He who seeks Me with the truth will find Me. He who seeks anyone other than Me will not find Me."

"O inhabitants of earth! Renounce all that you are deceived with of the earth and come towards My honour, My companionship and sitting in My company. Find comfort in Me and I will provide you with comfort and I will hasten towards your love. Surely I created the disposition of My beloved ones from the disposition of Ibrâhîm, My close friend, Mûsâ, My interlocutor, and Muhammad, My chosen one. I created the hearts of those who are desirous of Me from My light and I conferred it with My grandeur."

It is related from some past scholars that Allâh ﷻ addressed one of the *Siddîqîn* saying: "I have certain servants who love Me and whom I love.

They yearn to meet Me and I yearn to meet them. They remember Me and I remember them. They look at Me and I look at them. If you tread their path, I will love you. If you deviate from them, I will detest you.” He said: “O my Sustainer! What are their signs [by which I could identify them]?” Allâh ﷻ replied: “They are watchful of the shade during the day [in order to establish the times of salâh] just as an affectionate shepherd is watchful of his flock. They yearn for the setting of the sun just as a bird yearns for its nest at the time of sunset. When the night covers them, when the darkness pervades everything, when the beds have been laid out, when the family is tired, and when every lover goes into solitude with his beloved, they stand up on their feet and go down on their faces [in prostration]. They converse with Me through My Book [by reciting the Qur’ân] and adulate Me [by thanking Me] for My favours on them. There is he who is screaming out to Me, he who is crying, he who is sighing and moaning. There is he who is standing, he who is sitting, he who is bowing and he who is prostrating. By My sight, they cannot bear it because of Me. By My hearing, they do not complain because of My love. The first thing that I will bestow upon them is these three things: (1) I will cast into their hearts from My light. They will then convey on My behalf just as I will inform others about them. (2) If the heavens and the earth and all that they contain were to be placed in their scales, I will make all this insignificant in their eyes. (3) I will turn full with My countenance towards them. You will see that the person towards whom I turn fully with My countenance, will know what I want to bestow to him.”

It is related in the Traditions of Dâ’ûd عليه السلام thus: “Say to My servants who turn fully towards My love: ‘No harm will come to you when I remain concealed from My creation [i.e. in this world] and when I raise the veils between Myself and you [in the hereafter] so that you could see Me with the eyes of your hearts. No harm will come to you when I turn the world away from you while I lay out My *Dîn* for you. The anger of the creation will not harm you provided you seek My pleasure.’”

ON GRATITUDE

You should know that Allâh ﷻ attached gratitude to remembrance in His Book. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

“The remembrance of Allâh is the greatest.” (Sûrah al-‘Ankabût, 29: 45)

Allâh ﷻ says:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ

“Therefore remember Me, I will remember you, and be thankful to Me and do not be ungrateful.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 152)

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنْتُمْ

“What will Allâh do by punishing you if you are grateful and have conviction?” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 147)

وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ

“And We shall reward those who express gratitude.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 145)

Allâh ﷻ quotes the words of Satan, the accursed one: “I too shall certainly lie in wait for them on Your straight path.” It is said that the path that is referred to is the path of gratitude. Satan therefore said:

وَلَا يَحِثُّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ

“And You will not find the majority of them to be grateful.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 17)

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرُونَ

“There are few of My servants who are grateful.” (Sûrah Saba’, 34: 13)

Allâh ﷻ promises to give more when there is gratefulness. He made this promise without any exception. Allâh ﷻ says:

لَإِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

“If you are grateful, I will give you more.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 7)

On the other hand, He made an exception in five things: in giving wealth, in accepting supplication, in giving sustenance, in forgiveness and in repentance. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكُمْ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ

“Allâh will enrich you in the future through His bounty if He wills.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 28)

فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ إِنْ شَاءَ

“He then, if He so wills, removes that misery for which you had called upon Him.” (Sûrah al-An‘âm, 6: 41)

وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

“And Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills without reckoning.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 212)

وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

“and pardons sins below that of whomever He wills.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 48)

وَيُتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ

“Allâh will destine repentance for whomever He wills.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 15)

Gratefulness is from among the characteristics of divinity. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

“Allâh is appreciative, forbearing.” (Sûrah at-Taghâbun, 64: 17)

Allâh ﷻ made gratefulness the opening speech of the inhabitants of Paradise. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ

“They said: ‘All thanks are due to Allâh who fulfilled to us His promise.’” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 74)

وَأَخِيرَ دَعْوَهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“And the end of their invocation [will be]: ‘All praise is due to Allâh who is the Sustainer of the entire universe.’” (Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 10)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A grateful eating person is on the same level as a patient fasting person.” ‘Atâ’ *rahimahullâh* said: “I went to ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* and asked her: ‘Inform us of the most astonishing thing which you saw in the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.’ She began crying and then said: ‘Which part of his life was not astonishing!? One night he came to me and got into my bed – or she said, into my bed

covering. He got so close to me that my skin was touching his skin. He then said: ‘O daughter of Abû Bakr! Let me worship my Sustainer.’ I replied: ‘I love your being close to me. However, I will give preference to your wish.’ I let him leave. He got up, went to a utensil of water, performed the *wudû* without pouring excessive water, and then began offering *salâh*. He began crying to the extent that tears flowed onto his chest. He then went into the bowing posture (*rukû*) and began crying. He then went into prostration and began crying. He then raised his head and began crying. He continued crying in this manner till Bilâl ؓ came and informed him of the time for the [*fajr*] *salâh*. I said to him: ‘What is it that is making you cry, whereas Allâh ﷻ has forgiven you all your past and future sins?’ He replied: ‘Should I not be a grateful servant? And why should I not do this when Allâh ﷻ revealed this verse:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ
الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَخْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ
وَتَصْنِيفِ الرِّيحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ
لَايَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

“Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the changing of the night and day, and in the ships that sail upon the ocean with things of benefit for mankind, and in the water which Allâh sent down from the sky thereby giving life to the earth after it had been lifeless and dispersed in it all kinds of animals, and in the changing of the winds and in the clouds that are subservient to His command between the heaven and earth - surely in all these things are signs for the intelligent.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 164)

This shows that crying should never stop. This can also be inferred from the following story that one of the Prophets passed by a small rock from which a lot of water was gushing forth. He was astonished at seeing this. Allâh ﷻ enabled the rock to speak. It said: “I am crying out of fear ever since I heard these words of Allâh ﷻ: “beware of that fire whose fuel is men and

stones.” [98] The Prophet asked Allâh ﷻ to save this particular rock from this, and Allâh ﷻ accepted his request. After some time he saw that rock in the same state [of crying]. He asked: “Why are you crying now?” The rock replied: “My previous crying was because of fear. This crying is out of gratitude and happiness.”

The heart of a person is like that of a rock or even harder. This hard-heartedness cannot be removed except through crying out of fear and gratitude.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “An announcement will be made on the day of resurrection: ‘Those who used to praise Allâh ﷻ should stand up.’ A group of people will stand up, a flag will be raised for them, and they will enter Paradise. He was asked: ‘Who are those who used to praise Allâh ﷻ?’ He replied: ‘Those who express their gratitude to Allâh ﷻ in every situation.’” In other words, those who thank Allâh ﷻ at times of prosperity and adversity. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Praise [thanks] is the shawl of the Merciful [Allâh ﷻ].”

Allâh ﷻ addressed Ayyûb عليه السلام saying: “I am pleased with gratitude as a payment from My friends.” Allâh ﷻ also revealed to him the description of the patient ones: “Their abode is the abode of peace. When they enter it, I will inspire them to express gratitude. Expressing gratitude is the best speech. It is when they express gratitude that I seek to give them more. And I give them more by enabling them to see Me.”

When the treasures came down, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه asked: “What type of wealth should be taken?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “You should adopt a tongue that is engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and a heart that is grateful.” He thus ordered the treasuring of a grateful heart instead of wealth. Ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه said: “Gratitude is half of îmân.”

You should know that gratitude is connected to the heart, the tongue and the other parts of the body. Gratitude with the heart entails the determination to

do good and to desire the same for the entire creation. Gratitude with the tongue entails expressing gratitude to Allâh ﷻ and by saying words of praise that articulate this gratitude. Gratitude with the other parts of the body entails utilising these bounties of Allâh ﷻ in His obedience and abstaining from utilising them in His disobedience. This should be to such an extent that the gratitude of the eyes demands that you conceal every fault that you see of a Muslim. The gratitude of the ears demands that you conceal every fault that you hear about him. So all this is included among showing gratitude for the bounties of Allâh ﷻ through these different parts of the body.

Gratitude with the tongue is to express one's pleasure with Allâh ﷻ. And this is something which we have been commanded to do. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked a person: "How was your morning?" He replied: "I got up with goodness." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ repeated this question. Eventually, the third time when he asked this question, the person replied: "I got up with goodness. I praise Allâh ﷻ and thank Him." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "This is what I wanted to hear from you."

It was the practice of the past personalities to inquire of each other. Their purpose in doing so was to hear the other person thanking Allâh ﷻ. This they did so that the grateful person may remain obedient and the other who asked him may also remain obedient. Their purpose was not to show off by expressing their desire [for Allâh ﷻ]. Every person who is asked about his condition will either express gratitude, complain or remain silent. Expressing gratitude shows obedience while complaining is a repugnant act of disobedience on the part of people of religion. How, then, can complaining about the King of kings in whose control is everything, not be repugnant when such a complaint is made to a slave who is owned [by Allâh ﷻ] and who is unable to do anything at all?

It is therefore more appropriate for a servant who is unable to exercise patience over adversity and destiny, and which would lead to weakness in faith and then to complaining, to rather direct his complaint to Allâh ﷻ.

Because it is Allâh ﷻ who brings on adversity and He has the power to remove it. When a servant humiliates himself before Allâh ﷻ, it is a mark of honour in his favour. But when he complains to others apart from Allâh ﷻ, it is humiliating for him. To display his humiliation to another servant just like him is an abhorrent humiliation. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ لَكُمْ رِزْقًا
فَاَبْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ

“Without doubt, those whom you worship besides Allâh have no power to provide sustenance for you. Seek, then, sustenance from Allâh, and worship Him, and be grateful to Him.” (Sûrah al-‘Ankabût, 29: 17)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ

“Those whom you call on besides Allâh are servants like you.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 194)

Expressing gratitude with the tongue is thus one of the ways of showing gratitude to Allâh ﷻ.

It is related that a delegation came to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîzrahimahullâh. A youngster stood up to speak. So ‘Umarrahimahullâh said: “An elder person, an elder person [should speak].” The youngster said: “O leader of the believers! If the matter of caliphate was based on age, someone elder than you would have been at the head of the Muslims.” ‘Umar rahimahullâhsaid: “You may speak.” He said: “We are neither a delegation that has come to ask you of something nor are we a delegation that has come to complain of any fear. Your bounties have reached us, and we therefore have no need to ask you anything. At the same time, your justice has provided us with peace and security. We therefore have no need to complain about any fear. We are a delegation of gratitude. We have come to verbally express our gratitude to you, and we will now return.”

ON THE DISAPPROVAL OF PRIDE

Allâh ﷻ disapproved of pride in many places in His Book, and He disparaged every tyrannical, proud person. Allâh ﷻ says:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

“I will turn away from My signs those who are unjustly proud in the earth.”
(Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 146)

كَذَلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ قَلْبٍ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ

“In like manner does Allâh set a seal on the heart of every arrogant, tyrant.”
(Sûrah al-Mu‘min/Ghâfir, 40: 35)

وَاسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ

“They [the Messengers] sought victory, and every tyrant rebellious one failed.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 15)

إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ

“Surely He does not like those who are haughty.” (Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 23)

لَقَدْ اسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْا عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا

“They are extremely conceited of themselves and they have exceeded the bounds with utter disdain.” (Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 21)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

“Surely those who are too proud to worship Me shall enter Hell, disgraced.”
(Sûrah al-Mu’min/Ghâfir, 40: 60)

Pride is disapproved of in many places in the Qur’ân.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who has the equivalent of a mustard seed of pride in his heart will not enter Paradise. And he who has the equivalent of a mustard seed of îmân in his heart will not enter the Hell-fire.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘Pride is My upper garment and greatness is My lower garment. Whoever tries to compete with Me in any of these two, I shall fling him into Hell, and I will not bother.’”

Abû Salamah ibn ‘Abd ar-Rahmân said: ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ؓ and ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ؓ met each other on Mt. Safâ. They spoke to each other and then [‘Abdullâh] ibn ‘Amr ؓ departed. [‘Abdullâh] ibn ‘Umar ؓ remained crying. The people asked him: “Why are you crying, O Abû ‘Abd ar-Rahmân?” He said: “This person [referring to ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ؓ] said to me that he heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘He who has the equivalent of a mustard seed of pride in his heart, Allâh ﷻ will fling him on his face into the Hell-fire.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person will continue thinking high of himself till he is included among the tyrants. The punishment that shall afflict the tyrants will then afflict him as well.”

One day, Sulâymân ibn Dâ’ûd ؑ addressed the birds, the humans, the jinn and the animals saying: “Come out.” They came out comprising 200 000 humans and 200 000 jinn. He was then raised to such an extent that he could hear the soft humming sound of the angels in the heavens, engaged in the glorification of Allâh ﷻ. He was then lowered [to earth] till his feet touched the sea. He then heard a sound which, if there was in him an atom’s weight of pride, it would have caused him to sink down further than the height that it raised him to.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There will appear from the Hell-fire a neck which will have two ears to hear with, two eyes to see with and a tongue with which it will speak. It will say: “I have been appointed over three people: (1) every tyrant, rebellious person, (2) every person who invokes other deities with Allâh ﷻ, (3) those who create [draw] images.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A miserly person, a tyrant, and a person of evil character will not enter Paradise.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Paradise and the Hell-fire each one presented its case. The Hell-fire said: ‘The haughty and tyrannical people have been allotted to me.’ Paradise said: ‘How is it that only the weak, lowly and feeble people come to me?’ Allâh ﷻ said to Paradise: ‘You are My mercy. I show My mercy to whomever I will from among My servants through you.’ He said to the Hell-fire: ‘You are My punishment. I punish, through you, whomever I will.’ ‘And each one of you will have to be filled.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Evil is that servant who shows his pride while he forgets the Almighty, the Highest. Evil is that servant who shows his pride and haughtiness while he forgets the Greatest, the Loftiest. Evil is that servant who is negligent and careless, while he forgets the graveyards and decomposition [of the body]. Evil is that servant who is arrogant and rebellious, while he forgets the beginning and the end [of life].”

Thâbit said: “We heard that someone said: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Look at how proud such and such person is!’ He replied: ‘Isn’t there death thereafter?’”

‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When death approached Nûh ﷺ, he summoned his children and said: ‘I order you to do two things and I prohibit you from doing two things. I prohibit you from ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ and from pride. I order you to proclaim that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ. Surely if the heavens and the earth, and all that they contain, were placed on one pan of the scale and the proclamation that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ was placed on the other pan of the scale, it would

be heavier than the other pan. If the heavens and the earth and all that they contain were a single chain, and the proclamation that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ was placed onto it, it would shatter it. The second thing which I order you to do is to say:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ

(glory be to Allâh ﷻ and praise be to Him), because it is the prayer of every single thing and it is through it that every single thing receives sustenance.”

‘Îsâ عليه السلام said: “Glad tidings to he whom Allâh ﷻ taught His Book and then he did not die an arrogant person.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The inmates of the fire will be every stern, harsh, proud, avaricious and miserly person. And the inhabitants of Paradise will be the weak and poor.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Surely the most beloved of you in our sight and the closest to us in the hereafter shall be those of you who have the best character. The most abhorred of you in our sight and the furthest away from us shall be the prattlers, the boasters and the *mutafayhiqûn*.” The Companions y said: “O Messenger of Allâh! We know the prattlers and the boasters. Who are the *mutafayhiqûn*?” He replied: “The proud ones.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The proud ones will be resurrected on the day of resurrection in the form of tiny specks whom the people will completely trample. They will be in the form of humans but even the smallest of things will be higher than them. They will then be herded towards a prison in Hell which is known as Bûlis. The fire of fires will engulf them and they will be made to drink the pus of the inmates of Hell.”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The tyrants and proud ones will be raised on the day of resurrection in the form of tiny specks.

The people will trample on them because of their insignificance in the sight of Allâh ﷻ.”

Muhammad ibn Wâsi‘ said: “I went to Bilâl ibn Abî Burdah and said: ‘O Bilâl! Your father narrated to me from his father that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘There is a valley in Hell that is called Hub-hub. Allâh ﷻ made it incumbent on Himself that he will inhabit every tyrant in it.’ O Bilâl! Beware that you are not those who are made to inhabit it.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is a palace in the Hell-fire in which the proud people will be placed and it will then be sealed upon them.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Allâh! I seek refuge in You from even a puff of haughtiness.”

He whose soul leaves his body [i.e. he who passes away] while he is devoid of three things, shall enter Paradise. They are: pride, debts and malice.

Abu Bakr ؓ said: “No person should look down at any other Muslim, for surely an insignificant Muslim is great in the sight of Allâh ﷻ.” Wahb said: “When Allâh ﷻ created the Garden of Eden, He looked at it and said: ‘You are prohibited to every haughty person.’”

Muhammad ibn al-Husayn ibn ‘Alî *rahimahullâh* said: “No amount of pride enters the heart of a person without an equal amount of intelligence leaving his intellect – whether it be little or a lot.” Sulaymân *rahimahullâh* was asked about an evil with which a good is of no benefit. He replied that it is pride.

While an-Nu‘mân ibn Bashîr was on the pulpit, he said: “Satan has traps and snares. From among his traps and snares are: arrogance with the bounties of Allâh ﷻ, conceit over the bestowal of Allâh ﷻ, pride over the servants of Allâh ﷻ, and following one’s desires in matters other than the essence of Allâh ﷻ. We ask Allâh ﷻ for pardon and well-being in this world and in the hereafter through His kindness and beneficence.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ does not look at a person who drags his lower garment [below his ankles] out of pride.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There was a person who was vexing his pride because of the shawl that he was wearing, and he became conceited. Allâh ﷻ suddenly swallowed him into the earth. He is reverberating in it till the day of resurrection.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who drags his lower garment out of pride, Allâh ﷻ will not look at him [with mercy] on the day of resurrection.”

Zayd ibn Aslam narrates: “I went to Ibn ‘Umar ؓ. ‘Abdullâh ibn Wâqid passed by him, wearing a new garment. I heard him [Ibn ‘Umar ؓ] saying: ‘O my son! Raise your lower garment for I certainly heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘Allâh ﷻ does not look at the person who drags his lower garment out of pride.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When my followers start walking proudly and the Persians and Romans begin serving them, Allâh ﷻ will impose some of them over the others.” Ibn al-A‘râbî *rahimahullâh* said: “This refers to walking proudly and haughtily.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who considers himself to be great and walks proudly will meet Allâh ﷻ while He is angry with him.”

Abû Bakr al-Hudhalî *rahimahullâh* narrates: “We were in the company of al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* when Ibn al-Ahtam passed by us, going towards the palace, wearing a silk *jubbah* with layers woven over each other over his calves, and his long outer garment sticking out from it. He was walking with pride and arrogance. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* looked at him just once and said: ‘How terrible! How terrible! Walking conceitedly, looking with the corner of his eyes out of pride, puffing his cheeks out of pride, looking at his side with pride! O foolish one! You are looking at your self at bounties for which you neither showed gratitude nor mentioned, which you

did not take in accordance with the order of Allâh ﷻ, and without fulfilling the rights of Allâh ﷻ therein. In every part of it is a bounty of Allâh ﷻ and a turnabout for Satan. By Allâh! For a person to walk his natural way or to convulse like a mad man is better for him than to walk [proudly] in this way.’ Ibn al-Atham heard this. He came back and excused himself before al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*. The latter said: ‘Do not excuse yourself before me. Instead, repent to Allâh ﷻ. Have you not heard the words of Allâh ﷻ:

وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا

“Do not walk on the earth conceitedly. You will never be able to render the earth asunder nor will you ever reach the mountains in height.” (Sûrah Banî Isrâ’îl/al-Isrâ’, 17: 37)

On one occasion, a youngster wearing beautiful clothes passed by al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*. He called him and said: “O son of Âdam! You are proud of your youth and you are enamoured by your appearance. It is as though the grave has already covered your body and that you have already received the reward of your deeds. Alas! Treat your heart [and do not become proud by your external appearance] because Allâh ﷻ wants His servants to rectify their hearts.”

Muhammad ibn Wâsi‘ *rahimahullâh* saw his son acting conceitedly. He called him and asked him: “Do you know who you are? As for your mother, I purchased her for 100 dirhams. And as for your father, may Allâh ﷻ not make many like him among the Muslims.”

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ saw a man dragging his lower garment, so he said: “Satan has brothers.” He repeated this two or three times.

It is related that Mutrif ibn ‘Abdillâh ibn ash-Shakhîr saw al-Muhallab walking proudly in a silk *jubbah*. So he said: “O ‘Abdullâh! This is a walk which Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ detest.” Al-Muhallab replied: “Don’t you know who I am?” He said: “I certainly know who you are. Your beginning was a drop of sperm and the end of you will be a rotting corpse. And between these two stages of your life, you are carrying filth [urine,

stool, pus, etc. in your body].” Al-Muhallab then continued and gave up walking in that manner.

It was in this regard that a poet said:

عجبت من معجب بصورته – وكان بالأمس نطفة مذره
وفي غد بعد حسن هيئته – يصير في القبر جيفة قذره

“I am astonished by a person who is conceited by his appearance, when just yesterday he was a drop of sperm. And tomorrow, after this beautiful appearance of his, he will become a rotting corpse in the grave.”

Khalf al-Ahmar said:

لنا صاحب مولع بالخلاف – كثير الخطأ قليل الصواب
أشد لجاجا من الخنفساء – وأزهى إذا ما مشى من غراب

“We have a friend who likes to contradict everything. He errs a lot and is rarely correct. Yet, he is more insistent than a dung beetle, and more conceited than a crow when he walks.”

Another poet said:

قلت للمعجب لما – قال مثلي لا يراجع
يا قريب العهد بالمنخر – ج لم لا تتواضع

“When a haughty person said: ‘There is no one like me’, I said to him: ‘O you who are going to depart very soon, why don’t you humble yourself?’”

Dhû an-Nûn al-Misrî *rahimahullâh* said:

أيها الشامخ الذي لا يرام – نحن من طينة عليك السلام
إنما هذه الحياة متاع – ومع الموت تستوي الأقدام

“O you lofty person who thinks that there is none like him! We who are [buried] in the soil send greetings to you. This life is just an enjoyment [for a few days]. When death comes, all the feet are equal [everyone is treated equally – the grave will devour all].”

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* said with regard to the following verse:

تَمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ يَمُطُ

“He then went to his kinsfolk with pride.” (Sûrah al-Qiyâmah, 75: 33)

In other words, he went haughtily and arrogantly. And Allâh ﷻ knows best.

ON PONDERING AND REFLECTING OVER THE DAYS

Allâh ﷻ ordered pondering and reflecting in numerous places in His Glorious Book. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالتَّوَارِثِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَخْضَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ
فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ
بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

“Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the changing of the night and day, and in the ships that sail upon the ocean with things of benefit for mankind, and in the water which Allâh sent down from the sky thereby giving life to the earth after it had been lifeless and dispersed in it all kinds of animals, and in the changing of the winds and in the clouds that are subservient to His command between the heaven and earth - surely in all these things are signs for the intelligent.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 164)

The changing of the night and day refers to their alternation in coming and going. When one goes, the other comes after it. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً

“It is He who created the night and the day to follow each other.” (Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 64)

‘Atâ’ *rahimahullâh* said: This also refers to their differences in light and darkness, in having more light and less light.

A poet said:

يا راقد الليل مسرورا بأوله — إن الحوادث قد تطرقن أسحارا
لا تفرحن بليل طاب أوله — فرب آخر ليل أجج النارا

“O you who are lying down at night, rejoicing at the beginning of the night. Events are announcing the morning. Do not rejoice with a night whose beginning was enjoyable. It may well be that the latter part of the night kindled a fire.”

Another poet said:

إن الليالي للأنام مناهل — تطوي وتنشر دوحها الأعمار
فقصارهن مع الهموم طويلة — وطواهن مع السرور قصار

“The nights are watering places for the people. The ages [of people] shorten and expand in them. Short nights with worries appear very long. While long nights with happiness appear very short.”

Allâh ﷻ praises those who ponder and reflect. Allâh ﷻ says:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ
فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا

“Those who remember Allâh standing, and sitting, and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth. They say: ‘O our Sustainer! You have not created this in vain. You are pure from all defects.’” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 191)

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “The people reflected on Allâh ﷻ [in other words, although they reflected on the creation of Allâh ﷻ, they actually reflected on Allâh ﷻ].”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Reflect on the creation of Allâh ﷻ and do not reflect on Allâh ﷻ, for surely you cannot gauge His might.”

One day, the Prophet ﷺ appeared and saw some people deep in thought. He asked them: “Why is it that you are not talking?” They replied: “We are reflecting on the creation of Allâh ﷻ.” He said: “You should continue doing that. Reflect on His creation but do not reflect on Him. Surely there is a white land in the west. Its light is its whiteness and its whiteness is its light. It is at a distance of the sun moving for 40 days. In it is a creation of Allâh ﷻ who did not disobey Allâh ﷻ even to the extent of the blink of an eye.” They asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Where is Satan from them?” He replied: “They do not even know whether Satan was created or not.” They asked: “Are these people from the progeny of Âdam?” He replied: “They do not even know whether Âdam was created or not.”

‘Atâ’ *rahimahullâh* said: “One day, ‘Ubayd ibn ‘Umayr and myself went to ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*. She spoke to us while there was a veil between us and her. She said: ‘O ‘Ubayd! What stops you from visiting us [more often]?’ He said: ‘The statement of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: ‘Visit at regular intervals and your love will increase.’ Ibn ‘Umayr then said: ‘Inform us of the most astonishing thing which you saw about the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.’ She began crying and then said: ‘Everything about him was astonishing. One night he came to me and lied down with me till his skin touched my skin. He then said: ‘Let me worship my Sustainer.’ He then got up, went to a waterskin, performed *wudû’* from it and began offering *salâh*. He cried till his beard got wet. He then went into prostration till the ground got wet. He then lied down on his side till Bilâl came to wake him up for the *fajr salâh*. Bilâl said: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Why are you crying when Allâh ﷻ already forgave you your past and future sins?’ He replied: ‘O Bilâl! Why should I not cry when Allâh ﷻ revealed this verse to me last night:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ

“Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of the day and night are signs for the intelligent.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 190)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: “Destruction to the person who recites this verse and does not ponder over it.”

Al-Auzâ‘î *rahimahullâh* was asked: “What is the extent of pondering over this verse?” He replied: “That a person reads it and fully comprehends it.”

Muhammad ibn Wâsi‘ *rahimahullâh* relates that a man from Basra rode to Umm Dharr after the demise of Abû Dharr ؓ and asked her about the worship of Abû Dharr ؓ. She replied: “The major portion of his day was spent in one corner of the house in contemplation.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “Reflection for an hour is better than spending the entire night in worship.”

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “Reflection is a mirror which shows you your good deeds and your evils.”

Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh* was asked: “You spend a lot of time in reflection.” He replied: “Reflection is the essence of the intellect.”

Sufyân ibn ‘Uyaynah *rahimahullâh* used to quote the following couplet very often:

إذا المرء كانت له فكرة - ففي كل شيء له عبرة

“If a person has the ability to reflect, he will find a lesson [and an admonition] in everything.”

Tâ’ûs *rahimahullâh* said: The disciples said to ‘Îsâ عليه السلام: “O spirit of Allâh! Is there anyone like you on the surface of the earth today?” He replied: “Yes. He whose speech is the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, whose silence is reflection, and whose seeing is an admonition, then he is certainly like me.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “He whose speech does not entail wisdom, it is foolish talk. He whose silence does not entail reflection, it is negligence. He whose seeing does not entail admonition, it is amusement.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

“I will turn away from My signs those who are unjustly proud in the earth.”
(Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 146)

In other words, I will prevent their hearts from reflecting about My system.

Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Give your eyes their share of worship.” The Companions yasked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is their share of worship?” He replied: “Looking in the Qur’ân, reflecting over it, and taking admonition from its astonishing facts.”

A woman who used to live in a rural area near Makkah said: “If the hearts of the righteous were to look at what is stored for them of the good of the hereafter through their reflection, living in this world would not please them and they will not feel settled in the world.”

Luqmân ؓ was in the habit of sitting in solitude for lengthy periods of time. His master used to pass by him and say: “O Luqmân! You sit all alone for lengthy periods of time. If you sat with the people it would be more sociable for you.” Luqmân ؓ would reply: “Sitting in solitude for lengthy periods of time enables one to reflect for longer periods. And reflecting for lengthy periods is a guide to the path of Paradise.”

Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullâh* said: “No person remained in reflection for lengthy periods without learning something. And no person learnt something without practising.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* said: “Reflecting over the bounties of Allâh ﷻ is from among the most superior forms of worship.”

‘Abdullâh ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh* saw Sahl ibn ‘Alî *rahimahullâh* sitting very still, deep in thought. So he asked him: “Where did you reach

[in your thoughts]?” He replied: “The *Sirât* (the bridge in the hereafter over which every person will have to cross).”

Bishr *rahimahullâh* said: “If people pondered over the greatness of Allâh ﷻ, they would not disobey Him.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ﷺ said: “Two rak‘ats of average length offered with reflection are better than remaining the entire night in worship without any heart [i.e. without any concentration].”

While Abû Shurayh was walking, he suddenly sat down, covered his face with his garment, and began crying. someone asked him: “Why are you crying?” He replied: “I pondered over the passing of my life, the paltriness of my deeds, and the closeness of my death.”

Abû Sulaymân *rahimahullâh* said: “Accustom your eyes to crying and your hearts to reflection.” He also said: “Reflection over the world is a veil from the hereafter and a punishment for the people of *wilâyah* (those who acquired proximity to Allâh ﷻ). Reflection over the hereafter produces wisdom and revives the hearts.”

Hâtim *rahimahullâh* said: “It is through taking a lesson (*‘ibrah*) that knowledge increases. It is through the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ that love increases. It is through reflection that fear [of Allâh ﷻ] increases.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ﷺ said: “Reflecting over good prompts one to practise on it. Remorse over evil prompts one to abandon it.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “The people of intelligence continually accustom themselves with the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ over reflection, and with reflection over the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ to such an extent that they are able to make their hearts speak, which then speak with wisdom.”

Ishâq ibn Khalaf *rahimahullâh* said: Dâ’ûd at-Tâ’î *rahimahullâh* was on a roof on a moon-lit night. He began reflecting on the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He was looking at the sky and began crying till he

eventually fell into his neighbour's house. The owner of the house jumped up naked from his bed with a sword in his hand, thinking that he was a thief. When he saw that it was Dâ'ûd, he retracted and kept the sword aside. He asked him: "Who pushed you from the roof?" He replied: "I did not even feel that happening."

Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: "The noblest and loftiest assemblies is sitting with reflection on the field of *tauhîd*, inhaling the sweet fragrance of cognition (*ma'rifah*), drinking with a glass of love from the ocean of love, and looking while having beautiful thoughts about Allâh ﷻ." He then said: "O what a great assembly that is! And what a delicious drink that is! Glad tidings to the one who is blessed with it."

Ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* said: "Seek assistance in speech by remaining silent and in reaching conclusions by reflection." He also said: "Looking correctly into matters is salvation from deception. Determination in giving an opinion entails peace from shortcomings and remorse. Looking and pondering are indications of resoluteness and intelligence. Consulting the wise people results in firmness in the self and strength in one's insight. You should therefore ponder before making a firm decision, plan before you can attack, and consult before you can advance." He also said: "Virtues are four: (1) Wisdom. Its basis is reflection. (2) Chastity. Its basis is in lust. (3) Strength. Its basis is in anger. (4) Justice. Its basis is in having a balance in the powers of the self."

ON THE SEVERITY OF DEATH

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentioned death and its agony and pain. He ﷺ said: “It is equivalent to being struck 300 times with a sword.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about the severity of death. He said: “The easiest death is like a thorn in wool. When the thorn is removed, some wool certainly comes out with it.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ visited a sick person and said: “I know what he is experiencing. Every single vein is individually experiencing the pain of death.”

‘Alî ؓ would encourage the people to fight [in waging jihâd] by saying: “If you do not go to fight, you will still die. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, being struck a thousand times by a sword is easier for me than dying on my bed.”

Al-Auzâ‘î *rahimahullâh* said: “We heard that the dead person continues experiencing the pangs of death till he is resurrected from his grave.”

Shaddâd ibn Aus *rahimahullâh* said: “Death is the most terrifying horror to a believer in this world and in the hereafter. It is worse than being sawn off by saws, cut by scissors, and boiled in huge pots. If a dead person was given life and informed the people of this world about the horrorifying experience of death, they will not derive any benefit from life and they will not enjoy any sleep.”

Zayd ibn Aslam narrates from his father who said: “If any levels of a believer are left which he cannot reach through his deeds, death is made severe onto him so that he may reach his level in Paradise through the pangs and pains of death. If an unbeliever has any good for which he is not rewarded, death is made easy for him so that he may receive his reward of good in full [in this world] so that he may then proceed to the Hell-fire.”

It is related with regard to a person that he used to inquire a lot about the sick people about their experiencing the onset of death. When he himself fell ill, someone asked him: “What about you? How do you find it?” He replied: “It is like the skies are placed firmly onto the earth and it is as though my soul is going through the eye of a needle.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A sudden death is a cause of comfort to a believer and a source of regret to a sinner.”

It is related from Mak-hûl that the Prophet ﷺ said: “If a single strand of hair of the deceased were to be placed on the inhabitants of the earth and heavens, they would have died by the will of Allâh ﷻ. This is because there is death in every single strand. And when death is placed on anything, it most certainly dies.”

It is related that if a drop of the pain of death were to be placed on the mountains of this world, they would all melt.

It is related that when Ibrâhîm ؑ passed away, Allâh ﷻ asked him: “What do you think of death, O My friend?” He replied: “Like a skewer that is thrust into wet wool and then pulled out.” Allâh ﷻ said: “Listen! We had made your death an easy death [you can thus gauge the death of those who was made severe].”

It is related that when the soul of Mûsâ ؑ went to Allâh ﷻ, He asked him: “O Mûsâ! What do you think of death?” He replied: “I found my self like a sparrow that is placed alive in a frying pan. It does not die, whereby it could gain solace from death, nor can it save itself whereby it could fly away.” It is also related that he said: “I found my self like a live sheep being skinned by a butcher.”

It is related that the Prophet ﷺ had a bowl of water at the time of death. He used to dip his hand in the water and wipe it on his face. He would then say: “O Allâh! Make easy for me the pangs of death.” And Fâtimah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* would say: “O what pain! O what pain you are

experiencing, O my beloved father!” The Prophet ﷺ would reply: “There will be no pain on your father after this day.”

‘Umar ؓ said to Ka‘b al-Ahbâr ؓ: “O Ka‘b! Tell us about death.” He said: “Indeed, O leader of the believers! Death is like a tree that has many thorns. The tree is inserted in the body of a person. Every thorn attaches itself to every vein [of the person’s body]. Then a strong person pulls out that tree with great force. He therefore draws out whatever the thorns attached themselves to, and leaves behind what they did not attach themselves to.”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “A person experiences the pain and pangs of death while the joints of his body greet each other saying: ‘Peach be on you. You are leaving me and I am leaving you till the day of resurrection.’” These are the pangs of death that are experienced by the friends and beloveds of Allâh ﷻ. What will be our case, while we are immersed in sins?! When, together with the pangs of death, the other calamities will afflict us one after the other?!

The calamities of death are three:

- (1) The extreme pain when the soul is removed, as mentioned previously.
- (2) Seeing the angel of death, and fear and terror entering the heart on seeing him. Even if the strongest man were to look at the appearance of the angel who is going to take the soul away of a sinful person, he will not be able to look at him full in the face.

It is related that Ibrâhîm ؑ said to the angel of death: “Can you show me your appearance with which you take away the soul of a sinner?” He replied: “You will not be able to look at me.” Ibrâhîm ؑ said: “I will be able to do so.” The angel of death said: “Okay, turn away from me.” He turned away and then looked back at him. He sees a black man, with hairs standing on their ends, having a terrible stench, wearing black clothes, with flames of fire and smoke coming out of his mouth and nostrils. [On seeing this appearance], Ibrâhîm ؑ fell unconscious. When he regained

consciousness, the angel of death was standing before him in his first form. Ibrâhîm عليه السلام said: “O angel of death! If a sinner sees your appearance only at the time of death, that will be sufficient [as a punishment] for him.”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Dâ'ûd عليه السلام was jealous [99] by nature. When he left home, he would lock the doors. One day, he locked the doors and left. His wife looked and saw a man in the house. She said to herself: “Who permitted this man to come into the house? If Dâ'ûd were to come now, this man will be in trouble.” Dâ'ûd عليه السلام just walked in then and saw the man there. He asked: “Who are you?” The man replied: “I am that person who does not fear kings and whose barricades and obstacles cannot stop me.” Dâ'ûd عليه السلام said: “By Allâh, then you are most certainly the angel of death.” Dâ'ûd عليه السلام then remained firmly at the spot where he was standing.

It is related that 'Îsâ عليه السلام passed by a skull. He struck it with his leg and said: “Speak, by the permission of Allâh.” It said: “O spirit of Allâh! I was the king of a certain era. While I was sitting in my kingdom on my throne, with my armies and servants sitting around me, the angel of death came to me and started removing each part from my body separately. My soul then came out and went to him. Oh! Despite that huge gathering, it was as though I was the only one there. Oh! Despite the sociable atmosphere, I experienced total isolation.” This is the calamity which the sinners will experience and from which the obedient ones will be spared.

The Prophet narrates a mere pang at the time when the soul is removed without experiencing the terror that a person who sees the appearance of the angel of death in that [terrifying] form. If he were to see that terrifying appearance in his dream, the remainder of his life will become loathsome. How, then, will it be when he actually sees that terrifying appearance [of the angel of death]? As for the obedient servant [of Allâh ﷻ], he will see the angel of death in the most beautiful and attractive appearance.

'Ikramah *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn 'Abbâs رضي الله عنه that Ibrâhîm عليه السلام was a jealous husband (refer to previous footnote). He had a place wherein he used to worship. When he used to come out of there, he would lock it. One

day, when he returned, he found a man in the very depths of the house. He asked him: "Who permitted you to enter my house?" He replied: "The master of the house gave me access to the house." Ibrâhîm عليه السلام said: "I am the master of the house." He said: "That Being who is a greater master than you and me gave me access to the house." Ibrâhîm عليه السلام asked: "Who are you from among the angels?" He replied: "I am the angel of death." Ibrâhîm عليه السلام asked: "Can you show me your appearance with which you take the soul of a believer?" He replied: "Yes. Turn away for a moment." Ibrâhîm عليه السلام turned away and then looked back. He saw a young man. He then described his beautiful face, beautiful clothes and wonderful fragrance. He then said: "O angel of death! If at the time of death, a believer does not receive anything else but your beautiful appearance, it will be sufficient [as a reward] for him."

From among these bounties is seeing the two angels that are appointed to constantly protect a person. Wuhayb *rahimahullâh* said: "It has reached us that every single person who passes away is certainly shown the two angels who record his deeds. If he was an obedient servant, they say to him: 'May Allâh reward you well on our behalf, for you made us sit in many a good gathering, and you made us attend many a good deed.' If he was a sinner, they say to him: 'May Allâh not reward you well on our behalf, for you made us sit in many an evil gathering, you made us attend many an evil deed, and you made us hear many an evil speech. May Allâh not reward you well on our behalf.' The eyes of the deceased will stare transfixed at them and he will never return to the world."

(3) The sinners observing their abodes in the Hell-fire and their fear even before observing it. When they are in the pangs of death, all their powers are subdued and their souls are in submission in order to leave [their bodies]. Their souls will never leave them till they hear the voice of the angel of death giving them one of the two glad tidings: "O enemy of Allâh! Receive the glad tidings of the Hell-fire." If the person was an obedient servant, he will say: "O friend of Allâh! Receive the glad tidings of Paradise."

The fear of the intelligent ones is from here. The Prophet ﷺ said: “None of you will leave this world till he knows his destination and till he sees his abode: either Paradise or the Hell-fire.”

ON THE GRAVE AND QUESTIONING IN THE GRAVE

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When the deceased is placed in the grave, it will say to him: ‘Woe to you, O man! What deceived you about me? Did you not know that I am the abode of trials, the abode of darkness, the abode of isolation, and the abode of worms? What deceived you about me when you used to pass by me when you were alive?’ If he was a righteous person, someone will reply on his behalf saying: ‘Don’t you know that he used to command good and prohibit evil?’ The grave will say: ‘If that is the case, I will turn green and lush for him, his body will turn to light and his soul will go up to Allâh ﷻ.’”

‘Ubayd ibn ‘Umayr al-Laythî *rahimahullâh* said: “No person dies without the hole in which he is to be buried calls out to him saying: ‘I am the abode of darkness, solitude and isolation. If you were obedient to Allâh ﷻ in your life, I will be merciful to you today. If you were disobedient, I will be a terror to you today. I am the one who, if an obedient person enters me, he shall leave happily. And if a disobedient person enters me, he shall leave lamenting.’”

Muhammad ibn Subh *rahimahullâh* said: “We heard that when a person enters his grave and is punished therein or experiences anything distasteful, then his neighbours who are buried near him call out saying: ‘O you who remained behind in the world after his brothers and neighbours, didn’t you learn a lesson from us? Didn’t you ponder and reflect over our reaching the grave first? Did you not see our deeds coming to an end while you were given respite? Why did you not make up for what your brothers missed out?’ The lands of the earth call out: ‘O you who were deluded by this outward world! Why did you not learn a lesson from your family members who were already buried in the belly of the earth? Those who were deluded by the world before you and who were then taken away to the graves? You saw them being carried away by their beloved ones to that abode [grave] to which there is no alternative?’”

Yazîd ar-Riqâshî *rahimahullâh* said: “I heard that when a deceased is placed in his grave, his deeds surround him. Allâh ﷻ then enables his deeds to speak. They say: ‘O you who are isolated in his hole. All your friends and relatives are severed from you today. You have no friend from among us today.’ Ka‘b said: “When a righteous person is placed in the grave, his good deeds – salâh, fasting, pilgrimage, jihâd and charity – surround him. The angels of punishment then approach him from the direction of his feet. Salâh says: ‘Get away from him. There is no way of your getting to him. He used to spend lengthy periods standing before Allâh on his feet for my sake [i.e. to offer salâh].’ They then approach him from the direction of his head. Fasting says: ‘Get away from him. There is no way of your getting to him. He used to remain thirsty for lengthy periods for the sake of Allâh ﷻ in the world. You therefore cannot get to him. They then approach him from the direction of his body. Pilgrimage and jihâd say: ‘Get away from him. He used to tire himself and fatigue his body. He performed pilgrimage and waged jihâd for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. You therefore cannot get to him.’ They then approach him from the direction of his hands. Charity says: ‘Stay away from my friend. So much of charity came out of these two hands till they fell in the hand of Allâh ﷻ, seeking the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ. You therefore cannot get to him.’ It is then said to him: ‘Congratulations to you. You have done well while you were living and while you are dead as well.’ The angels of mercy then come to him and they lay out a carpet and a blanket from Paradise before him. His grave is then expanded for him as far as his eyes can see. A candle from Paradise is brought. He will enjoy its light till Allâh ﷻ raises him from his grave.”

‘Ubaydullâh ibn ‘Ubayd ibn ‘Umayr *rahimahullâh* was in a funeral and said: “I heard that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘The deceased sits and hears the footsteps of those above. But no one except his grave speaks to him. It says: ‘Woe to you, O man! Were you not warned about me? Were you not warned about my constriction, my stench, my terrifying appearance and my worms? What preparations did you make for me?’”

Al-Barâ’ ibn ‘Âzib ؓ said: “We went with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for a funeral of a person from the Ansâr. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sat by his

grave with his head drooping down. He then said: ‘O Allâh! I seek refuge in You from the punishment of the grave.’ He said this three times. He then said: ‘When a believer is about to depart to the hereafter, Allâh ﷻ sends angels whose faces beam like the sun. They come with his embalming ingredients and his shroud. They then sit as far as his eyes can see. When his soul leaves him, every angel between the heavens and the earth and every angel in the heavens send salutations to him. The doors of the heavens are opened. Every single door desires that his soul enters through it. When his soul is taken up, it is said: ‘O my Sustainer! Here is this servant of Yours.’ Allâh ﷻ says: ‘Take him back and show him the honour that I prepared for him. I had promised him saying:

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ

“It is from it [soil] that We created you, and in it We shall return you.” (Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 55)

The deceased will hear the footsteps of the people who are returning [after having buried him]. He will be asked: “O you! Who is your Sustainer? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet?” He will reply: “Allâh is my Sustainer. Islam is my religion. Muhammad ﷺ is my Prophet.” They then rebuke him severely. And this is the final tribulation that is imposed on the deceased. When he says that, someone from among us announces: “You have spoken the truth.” And this is the meaning of the words of Allâh ﷻ:

يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ

“Allâh strengthens the believers with the firm word.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 27)

Then someone comes to him having a handsome face, a beautiful fragrance and wearing beautiful clothes. He says to him: “Take the glad tidings of the mercy of your Sustainer and gardens in which there are eternal bounties.” He replied: “And you, may Allâh give you glad tidings. Who are you?” He replies: “I am your good deeds. I take an oath by Allâh that I know that you were very swift in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ and very slow in the

disobedience of Allâh ﷻ. So Allâh ﷻ has rewarded you well.” An announcement is then made: “Lay out the carpets of Paradise for him and open for him a door to Paradise.” The carpets are laid out for him and a door to Paradise is opened for him. On seeing all this, he says: “O Allâh! Hasten the final hour so that I could return to my family and wealth.”

As for the unbeliever, when he is leaving for the hereafter and severing himself from the world, stern and harsh angels descend upon him. They have clothes of fire and lower garments of pitch. They surround him. When his soul leaves him, every angel that is between the heavens and the earth, and every angel in the heavens curse him. All the doors of the heavens are locked. Every door detests his having to pass through it. When his soul is taken up, it is flung, and it is said: “O Sustainer! This servant of Yours – neither do the heavens nor does the earth want to accept him.” Allâh ﷻ says: “Take him back and show him the evil which I prepared for him. I had promised him saying:

وَمِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ

“It is from it [soil] that We created you, and in it We shall return you.” (Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 55)

The deceased will hear the footsteps of the people who are returning [after having buried him]. He will be asked: “O you! Who is your Sustainer? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet?” He will reply: “I do not know.” It will be said to him: “You really did not know [in the world, therefore you do not know now].”

Someone with a repulsive face, stinking smell and ugly clothes will come to him and say: “Take the glad tidings of the wrath of Allâh ﷻ and a painful and eternal punishment.” He will say: “May Allâh give you glad tidings of evil. Who are you?” He will reply: “I am your evil deeds. I take an oath by Allâh that you were very swift in the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ and very slow in His obedience. So Allâh ﷻ has rewarded you with evil.” He will say: “May Allâh reward you with evil as well.”

Thereafter a deaf, blind and dumb creature will be appointed over him. This creature will have an iron rod. If all the humans and jinn tried to carry it they would not be able to do so. If a camel were to be struck by it, it would be reduced to dust. The creature will strike him once and he will be reduced to dust. His soul will return to him and he will be struck with it between his eyes. All those who are on earth will hear this strike. An announcement will then be made: “Lay out two slabs of fire for him and open for him a door to the Hell-fire.” Two slabs of fire will be laid down for him and a door to the Hell-fire will be opened for him.

Muhammad ibn Ka‘b al-Qurazî *rahimahullâh* used to recite this verse:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ

“Till death reaches one of them, he shall say: ‘O my Sustainer! Send me back. I might do some good deed in that which I left behind.’” (Sûrah al-Mu‘minûn, 23: 99-100)

He said: Allâh ﷻ will ask: “What do you want? What do you desire? Do you want to go back in order to accumulate wealth, plant plantations, build buildings, and cause springs to flow?” He will reply: “No. So that I might do some good deed in that which I left behind.” The almighty Allâh ﷻ will say: Never! It is merely a word that he utters.” In other words, he will say this at the time of death.

Abu Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “A believer in his grave will be in a green and lush garden. His grave will be widened till it is 70 feet. It will be illuminated to such an extent that it will be like the full moon. Do you know with regard to what this verse was revealed?:

فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا

“for him is a life of constriction.” (Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 124)

The Companions y replied: “Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ know best.” He said: “With regard to the punishment of the unbeliever in his grave.

Ninety nine monsters will be imposed on him. Do you know what a monster is? It is ninety snakes. Each snake will have seven heads. They will maul him, devour him and blow into his body till the resurrection.”

One should not be astonished by this specific number. The number of these snakes and scorpions are equivalent to the number of evil characteristics be they pride, showing off, envy, deception, malice, and all other evil traits and characteristics. They have a certain number of bases. Numerous branches subdivide from them. These subdivisions have further categories. It is those very [evil] characteristics that are destructive. And it is they themselves that turn into scorpions and snakes. The strong [evil] characteristics result in the biting by monsters, the weak among them result in the biting by scorpions, while those in-between result in the biting by snakes.

Those who delve into the hearts and who are endowed with insight are able to witness these destructive characteristics and their subdivisions through the light of insight. However, their exact number cannot be known except through the light of prophet-hood. Therefore, such narratives are outwardly authentic while having hidden mysteries as well. However, they are explicit to those endowed with insight. So the person to whom the reality of these narratives are not exposed should not reject their outward forms. Rather, the least stage of îmân is to believe them and accept them.

ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF CERTAINTY, THE EYE OF CERTAINTY, AND THE QUESTIONING ON THE DAY OF RECOMPENSE

Allâh ﷻ says:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ

“No such thing! If you knew with certainty.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 5)

In other words, if you knew about the resurrection with certainty, it would have diverted you from the greed for more and more, and from mutual boastfulness. You would have done those good deeds that would have benefited you, and you would have abandoned all that was of no benefit to you.

It is also said that had you known with certainty, as the Messengers ﷺ know, that wealth and boastfulness will be of no benefit to you on the day of resurrection, you would not be boastful of wealth and large numbers.

Allâh ﷻ then says:

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ

“You are sure to see Hell.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 6)

Allâh ﷻ takes an oath that you will certainly see the Hell-fire and its severity on the day of resurrection with your very eyes.

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ

“You will then certainly see it with the eye of certainty.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 7)

In other words, you will certainly see the blazing fire. The seeing which is the actual certainty refers to witnessing and seeing in a manner in which there is no doubt whatsoever.

If the question is asked that “What is the difference between the knowledge of certainty (*‘ilm al-yaqîn*) and the eye of certainty (*‘ayn al-yaqîn*)?” the reply is that the knowledge of certainty was with the Prophets with regard to their prophet-hood, and the eye of certainty was with the angels because they see [with their eyes] Paradise, Hell, the Tablet (al-Lauh), the Throne (al-‘Arsh), and the Chair (al-Kursî). They therefore have the eye of certainty.

If you wish, you could say that the knowledge of certainty is the knowledge of death and graves that the living have. This is because they know that the dead are in the graves, but they do not know what their condition is. On the other hand, the eye of certainty is enjoyed by the dead because they visually saw the graves: either a garden from the gardens of Paradise or a pit from the pits of Hell.

If you wish, you could say that the knowledge of certainty is knowledge of the resurrection while the eye of certainty refers to visually witnessing the resurrection and its terrors.

If you wish, you could say that the knowledge of certainty is knowledge of Paradise and Hell while the eye of certainty refers to visually seeing [Paradise and Hell].

Allâh ﷻ says:

يَوْمَ تُسْأَلُونَ يَوْمَعِدٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

“Then on that day you will certainly be asked about the reality of the bounties.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 8)

In other words, you will certainly be asked about the bounties of the world, be they the well-being of the body, the ability to hear and look, your earnings, the pleasures of eating and drinking, etc. You will be asked

whether you fulfilled your thanks to the Master of all these bounties, did you recognize Him through them, or were you ungrateful for all these bounties?

Ibn Abî Hâtim *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Mardawîyyah *rahimahullâh* narrate from Zayd ibn Aslam *rahimahullâh* from his father who said: the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ recited the following:

أَهَاكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ

“The greed for more and more has kept you heedless.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 1)

In other words, it has kept you heedless of the acts of obedience.

حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ

“Till you visit the graves.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 2)

In other words, till death comes to you.

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

“No such thing! Soon shall you come to know.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 3)

In other words, once you have entered your graves.

بَلَّغْنَاكُمْ كَلَامَنَا وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ

“Again. No such thing. Soon shall you come to know.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 4)

In other words, when you come out of your graves and go to the field of resurrection.

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ

“No such thing! If you knew with certainty.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 5)

In other words, when you stand in front of your Sustainer with your deeds.

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ

“You are sure to see Hell.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 6)

That is because the *Sirât* will be placed in the middle of Hell. There will be those Muslims who will be saved and there will be those who will be torn to pieces, and those who would have earned the Hell-fire.

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

“Then on that day you will certainly be asked about the reality of the bounties.” (Sûrah at-Takâthur, 102: 8)

In other words, you will be asked about your filled bellies, cool drinking water, the shade of houses, a normal physical appearance, and the enjoyment of sleep.

‘Alî رضي الله عنه said that the “bounties” refers to well-being. Abû Qilâbah narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said with regard to this verse: “There will be some people from my *ummah* who will combine butter and pure honey and eat it.”

‘Ikramah *rahimahullâh* narrates that when this verse was revealed, the Companions y asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What bounties are we enjoying? We merely fill half our bellies with barley bread.” Allâh ﷻ revealed to His Prophet ﷺ saying: “Ask them: Don’t you wear sandals and drink cool water? These are from among the bounties.”

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that when Sûrah at-Takâthur was revealed, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ recited it from beginning till end. The Companions y asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Which bounties will we be asked about? We merely have water and dates, our swords are hanging

from our necks, and the enemy is present. So which bounties will we be asked about?" He said: "Listen! You will be asked about all that."

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The first thing of the bounties that a person will be asked about on the day of resurrection will be that he will be questioned thus: Did We not give you a healthy body and satiated your thirst with cool water?"

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate from Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ went out one day and met Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه and 'Umar رضي الله عنه. He asked them: "What has caused you two to leave your homes at this hour?" They replied: "Hunger, O Messenger of Allâh!" He said: "I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, the very thing that caused you to leave your homes has caused me to leave my house as well. Come let's go." They went with him to the house of an Ansârî man. But he was not in his house. When the man's wife saw the Prophet ﷺ, she said: "Welcome." The Prophet ﷺ asked: "Where is your husband?" She replied: "He went out to bring sweet drinking water for us." The Ansârî happened to return just then. When he saw the Prophet ﷺ and his two companions, he said: "All praise is due to Allâh! There is no one who has more honourable guests than me today." He went out again and returned with a branch containing ripe and unripe dates. He said to them: "Eat from this." He then took a knife. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: "Do not slaughter a milk-providing animal." He went out and slaughtered a sheep for them. They ate of the sheep and from the branch of dates, and drank the [sweet] water. When their hunger was satiated and their thirst quenched, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه and 'Umar رضي الله عنه: "I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, you will certainly be asked about these bounties on the day of resurrection."

ON THE VIRTUE OF THE REMEMBRANCE OF ALLÂH I

Allâh ﷻ says:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ

“Remember Me and I will remember you.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 152)

Thâbit al-Bunânî *rahimahullâh* said: “I know when my Sustainer remembers me.” When the people heard this, they were astonished and asked: “How do you know this?” He replied: “When I remember Him, He remembers me.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

ادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

“Remember Allâh ﷻ abundantly.” (Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 41)

فَإِذَا أَقَضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ

“Then when you return from ‘Arafât for the *tawâf*, remember Allâh at the Mash‘arul Harâm. And remember Him as He has taught you.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 198)

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

“Once you have completed your rites of hajj, remember Allâh as you used to remember your forefathers. In fact, remember (Him) more than that.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 200)

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ

“Those who remember Allâh standing, sitting, and lying on their sides.”
(Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 191)

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتْ الصَّلَاةُ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ

“Once you have completed your salâh, remember Allâh standing, sitting, and lying down.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 103)

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “In other words, at night, by day, on land, on sea, while on a journey, while at home, in prosperity, in poverty, in illness, in good health, in privacy and in public.”

Allâh ﷻ says in disapproval of the hypocrites:

وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

“and they do not remember Allâh but little.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 142)

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ
بِالْعُدُوِّ وَالْأَصْحَابِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

“Continually remember your Sustainer in your heart with humility and awe, and without raising your voice. [Remember Him] by morning and evening and do not remain heedless.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 205)

وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

“and the remembrance of Allâh is the greatest.” (Sûrah al-‘Ankabût, 29: 45)

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “This has two meanings: (1) Allâh ﷻ remembering you is greater than your remembering Him. (2) The remembrance of Allâh ﷻ is greater than all other acts of worship apart from it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who is engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ while in the company of those who are negligent [of His remembrance] is like a green tree in a barren land.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who is engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ while in the company of those who are negligent [of His remembrance] is like a person who is fighting in a battle among those who are fleeing [from the battlefield].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘I am with My servant as long as he remembers Me and as long as his lips move with My remembrance.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No man has done a deed that would be most worthy of saving him from the punishment of Allâh ﷻ than the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.” The Companions yasked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Not even jihâd in the cause of Allâh?” He replied: “Not even jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. Unless you strike with your sword till it breaks. Then you strike with it till it breaks. Then you strike with it till it breaks.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who would like to graze in the gardens of Paradise should engage in abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh was asked: “Which deeds are the most superior?” He replied: “That you die while your tongue is moist with the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Ensure that your tongue is moist with the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ in the morning and in the evening, and you would have spent the morning and evening without any sin.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Engaging in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ in the morning and evening is superior to the breaking of swords in the cause of Allâh ﷻ and the abundant giving of wealth in charity.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘When My servant remembers Me in his heart, I remember him in My heart. When he remembers Me in an assembly, I remember him in an assembly greater than his assembly. When he comes towards Me by one span, I go towards him by one arm’s length. When he comes towards Me by one arm’s length, I go towards him by both arms outstretched. When he walks towards Me, I run towards him.’” The meaning of running towards him is that Allâh ﷻ accepts his call very quickly.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are seven people to whom Allâh ﷻ will provide shade on a day when there will be no shade except the shade provided by Him.” Among these seven is “a person who engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ in solitude and his eyes shed tears out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ.”

Abû ad-Dardâ’ ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Should I not inform you of the most superior and purest of your deeds in the sight of your Master, the highest in your ranks, better for you than giving silver and gold [in charity], and better for you than meeting your enemy in battle wherein you strike each others necks?” The Companions asked: “And what is that, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “Constant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘He who is preoccupied with My remembrance and is therefore unable to ask from Me, I shall give him better than what I give to those who ask from Me.’”

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “We heard that Allâh ﷻ said: ‘O My servant! Engage in My remembrance for a short while after *fajr* and a short while after *‘asr* and I will suffice you for the time in-between these two times.’”

Some ‘*ulamâ*’ said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘When I look into a servant’s heart and see that holding on to My remembrance is predominant in it, I see to all his affairs and I become his close companion, his converser and his friend.’”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “Remembrance is of two types. Remembrance of Allâh ﷻ that is between yourself and Allâh ﷻ alone [i.e. in complete privacy]. What a wonderful thing it is and how great its reward is! But superior to that is the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ at the time of all that He made unlawful.” [In other words, remembering Allâh ﷻ when about to commit an unlawful act and therefore abstaining from committing it].

It is related that every soul will depart from this world while it is thirsty, except for the person who was constant in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. Mu‘âdh ibn Jabal ؓ said: “The inhabitants of Paradise will not remorse about anything apart from a moment which they spent [in the world] in which they did not engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No people sit in an assembly remembering Allâh ﷻ without the angels surrounding them, mercy engulfing them, and Allâh ﷻ mentioning them before those who are with Him [i.e. the angels].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No people gather together engaging themselves in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ solely for His pleasure without an announcer in the heavens calling out: ‘You may leave having your sins forgiven. I have changed your evil deeds into good deeds.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When people sit in a gathering wherein they do not engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and they do not send salutations to the Prophet ﷺ, it is most certainly a remorse for them on the day of resurrection.”

Dâ’ûd ؑ said: “O my Allâh! If You see me leaving the assemblies of those who are engaged in remembrance [of You] and going towards the assemblies of those who are negligent [of Your remembrance], then break my leg before I reach them. Surely this is a bounty which You confer upon me.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A righteous assembly shall atone for the believer one million assemblies of evil.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ said: “The inhabitants of the heavens [the angels] look towards the houses of the inhabitants of earth in which the name of Allâh ﷻ is taken just as you look at the stars.”

Sufyân ibn ‘Uyaynah *rahimahullâh* said: “When a people gather for the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, Satan and the world move away from there. Satan says to the world: ‘Can’t you see what they are doing?’ The world replies: ‘Leave them. When they depart from there I will seize them by their necks and bring them to you.’”

It is related that Abû Hurayrah ؓ went into the market place and said: “I see you people here while the inheritance of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is being distributed in the musjid?!” The people went to the musjid and left the market place. On reaching there, they did not see any inheritance being distributed. They said: “O Abû Hurayrah! We did not see any inheritance being distributed in the musjid. We only saw some people engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and reciting the Qur’ân.” He said: “That is what the inheritance of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is.”

Al-A‘mash *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Sâlih *rahimahullâh* that Abû Hurayrah ؓ and Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ said: “Allâh ﷻ has special angels moving about on earth. This is in addition to the angels that record the deeds of man. When these angels find a people engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, they call each other and say: ‘Come, let’s go to what we were looking for.’ They come to these people and surround them till they reach the skies. Allâh ﷻ asks them: ‘What were My servants doing when you left them?’ They reply: ‘We left them engaged in Your praise, in expressing Your greatness and in glorifying You.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘Did they see Me?’ They reply: ‘No.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘What if they saw Me?’ They reply: ‘If they saw You, they will be more intense in glorifying You, praising You and in expressing Your greatness.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘From what

are they seeking refuge?’ They reply: ‘From the Hell-fire.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘Did they see it?’ They reply: ‘No.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘What if they saw it?’ They reply: ‘If they saw it, they will run and flee even more from it.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘What are they asking for?’ They reply: ‘They are asking for Paradise.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘Did they see it?’ They reply: ‘No.’ Allâh ﷻ asks: ‘What if they saw it?’ They reply: ‘They will be even more desirous of it.’ Allâh ﷻ says: ‘I make you witnesses that I have forgiven them.’ They say: ‘There was a person among them who was not part of them. He merely went there for some work.’ Allâh ﷻ says: ‘They are such a people that even a person who is sitting among them is not deprived.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The most superior statement that I and the Prophets before me made was this:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ

“There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. He is one, He has no partner.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who says the following 100 times a day shall receive a reward equivalent to freeing ten slaves, 100 good deeds will be recorded in his favour, 100 evils will be wiped off his record, and it will be a protection for him from Satan for that day till the evening. And no one would have come with a deed superior to it except he who does more than that.” The words are:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَكَهُ الْحَمْدُ

“There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. He is one, He has no partner. His is the kingdom and He has power over everything.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No person performs a perfect ablution (*wudû*), looks up to the sky, and says the following, without the doors of Paradise being opened for him so that he may enter from whichever door he likes.” The words are:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

“I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh. He is one, He has no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.”

ON THE VIRTUES OF SALÂH

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا

“Surely salâh is incumbent upon the Muslims at its appointed times.”
(Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 103)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are five salâhs which Allâh ﷻ prescribed to the servants. Whoever fulfils them without leaving out anything therein by way of not showing due importance to them, then Allâh ﷻ makes a promise to him that He will admit him into Paradise. Whoever does not fulfil them, Allâh ﷻ makes no promise to him. If He wills, He may punish him, and if He wills, He may admit him into Paradise.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The similitude of the five salâhs is like that of a deep river having sweet water flowing in front of one of your houses. He bathes therein five times every day. Do you think any of his dirt will remain on him?” The Companions ﷺ replied: “Nothing will remain.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Surely the five salâhs wash off sins just as water removes dirt.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The salâhs are an atonement for the sins that are committed between them as long as major sins are abstained from.” This is similar to what Allâh ﷻ says: “Surely good deeds drive away evil deeds.” The words “drive away” mean that they completely expiate them as though they were not even there.

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*, Muslim *rahimahullâh* and other compilers of Hadîth narrate from Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ that a man kissed a woman. He came to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him of what transpired. It seemed that he was

asking for a way of atoning for this sin. This verse was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ : “

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ ط إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

“Establish salâh at the two ends of the day and in some parts of the night. Surely good deeds drive away evil deeds.” (Sûrah Hûd, 11: 114)

The man asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Does this apply specifically to me?” He replied: “It is for anyone from my *ummah* who does that.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate from Abû Umâmah رضي الله عنه that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Establish the punishment of Allâh عز وجل on me.” He said this one or two times, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ turned away from him. It was then the time of salâh [and it was performed]. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ completed the salâh, he asked: “Where is that man?” The man said: “Here I am.” He asked: “Did you make a complete ablution and offered the salâh with us, just now?” He replied: “Yes.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “As regards the sin which you committed, you are like the day your mother gave birth to you. Now do not commit it again.” It was at that time that Allâh عز وجل revealed this verse to His Messenger ﷺ :

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ ط إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

“Establish salâh at the two ends of the day and in some parts of the night. Surely good deeds drive away evil deeds.” (Sûrah Hûd, 11: 114)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The difference between us and the hypocrites is the *ishâ* and *fajr* salâhs. They are unable to perform them.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who meets Allâh عز وجل while having wasted salâh [i.e. not performed it], Allâh عز وجل will not bother about any of

his other good deeds.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Salâh is the pillar of Islam. He who abandons it has in fact demolished Islam.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “What deeds are the most superior?” He replied: “Offering salâh at its prescribed times.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who safeguards the fivesalâhs by perfecting purity for them and offering them at the prescribed times, then those salâhs will be a light and proof for him on the day of resurrection. And he who neglects them will be raised with Pharaoh and Hâmân.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The key to Paradise is salâh.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “After belief in the oneness of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ did not make incumbent anything more beloved to Him than salâh. If there was anything more beloved to Him, He would have ordered the angels to carry it out. There are those who are in constant *rukû‘* (bowing posture), those who are in constant prostration, those who are constantly standing [in salâh] and those who are constantly sitting [in salâh].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who deliberately leaves out asalâh has committed an act of unbelief (*kufr*).” In other words, he is close to coming out of îmân – untying the rope of îmân and breaking its pillar. This is similar to the colloquial usage that when a person is close to entering a country, it is said that he reached it and entered it.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who deliberately leaves out asalâh has freed himself from the protection of Muhammad ﷺ.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever performs a beautiful *wudû‘* and then leaves for salâh, he is considered to be already in salâh as long as he leaves with the intention of salâh. And for one step of his, a good deed is written in his favour while for the next step an evil is wiped out from his record. When any of you hears the *iqâmah*

(standing up for salâh), he should not lag behind. Surely the one who shall receive the greatest reward is he who lives furthest away [from the masjid].” Some people asked: “Why is it so, O Abû Hurayrah?” He said: “Because of the many footsteps [that he has to take].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No person gained proximity to Allâh ﷻ with anything superior to secret prostrations.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No Muslim prostrates once for Allâh ﷻ without Allâh ﷻ raising his rank by one and wiping off one sin from his record.”

It is related that a man said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: “Supplicate to Allâh ﷻ that He makes me from among those who enjoy your intercession and blesses me with your companionship in Paradise.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: “Help me with abundant prostrations.”

It is said that the closest a person is to Allâh ﷻ is when he is in prostration. This is the meaning of the words:

وَأَسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ

“Prostrate [yourself] and draw near [to Allâh].” (Sûrah al-‘Alaq, 96: 19)

Allâh ﷻ says:

سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ

“Their marks are on their faces, from the effect of prostration.” (Sûrah al-Fath, 48: 29)

It is said that this refers to what gets stuck on their foreheads from the ground when they are in prostration. Others say that it refers to the light of humility which illuminates itself from within and is displayed on the outside. And this explanation is more correct. Others say that it refers to the whiteness that will be on their faces on the day of resurrection because of the ablution that they used to perform.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When man recites a verse of prostration and goes into prostration, Satan distances himself crying, and saying: ‘O destruction to me! This person was ordered to prostrate and he prostrated. He will get Paradise for it. I was ordered to prostrate and I refused. I will get the Hell-fire for my refusal.’”

It is related that ‘Alî ibn ‘Abdillâh ibn ‘Abbâs *rahimahullâh* used to perform 1000 prostrations every day. The people used to refer to him as as-Sajjâd – one who prostrates a lot.

It is related that ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* used to prostrate on nothing but soil.

Yûsuf ibn Asbât *rahimahullâh* used to say: “O assembly of youth! Hasten with your wellness before illness overtakes you. There is no one of whom I am jealous except that person who fulfils his bowing and prostrating postures with perfection. This is because I am unable to do that [because of old age and illness].”

Sa‘îd ibn Jubayr *rahimahullâh* said: “I do not regret about anything of the world except for prostration.”

‘Uqbah ibn Muslim *rahimahullâh* said: “There is no quality in a person that is more beloved in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than a person who loves to meet Allâh ﷻ. And there is no time a person is closest to Allâh ﷻ than when he falls into prostration.”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said: “The closest a person is to Allâh ﷻ is when he is in prostration. You should therefore engage in abundant supplication while in prostration.”

ON THE PUNISHMENT FOR HE WHO ABANDONS SALÂH

Allâh ﷻ says with regard to the inmates of Hell:

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ، ثَالِثًا لَمْ تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ، وَلَمْ تَكُنْ
تُطْعِمُ الْمِسْكِينَ، وَكُنَّا تَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ.

“What has caused you to fall into Hell? They will reply: ‘We were not of those who offered the salâh. Nor did we feed the needy. And we used to indulge in [vain] discussions with those who used to indulge therein.’” (Sûrah al-Muddaththir, 74: 42-45)





Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The dividing line between a man and unbelief is abandoning salâh.”



Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The dividing line between a man and polytheism or unbelief is abandoning salâh.” Imâm Abû Dâ’ûd *rahimahullâh* and Imâm an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is nothing between a person and unbelief except abandoning salâh.” Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The dividing line between unbelief and îmân is abandoning salâh.” Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The dividing line between a person and unbelief is abandoningsalâh.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The covenant that is between us and them is salâh. He who abandons it has committed unbelief.”




At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who abandons salâh deliberately has committed an open act of unbelief.” Another narration states: “The dividing line between a person


and unbelief or polytheism is abandoningsalâh. If he abandons salâh he has committed unbelief.” Another narration states: “There is no dividing line between a person and polytheism except abandoning salâh. When he abandons salâh, he has committed polytheism.”

‘Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit  narrates: “My dear friend [Muhammad]  advised me to do seven things: he said: (1) Do not ascribe any partner to Allâh  even if you are cut up into pieces, burnt or crucified. (2) Do not leave out salâh deliberately. Surely he who leaves out salâh deliberately has come out from the religion. (3) Do not commit an act of disobedience for it brings on the wrath of Allâh . (4) Do not consume alcohol for it is the head of all evil....

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Companions of Muhammad  did not consider any deed which anyone left out to be unbelief except for salâh. The following Hadîth is also authentic: the dividing line between a person and unbelief and îmân is salâh. If he abandons it, he has committed polytheism. Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “There is no share in Islam for he who has no salâh. And there is no salâh for he who has no *wudû*’ (ablution).”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates: “There is no îmân for he who has no trustworthiness. There is no salâh for he who has no purity. There is no Islam for he who has no salâh. The position ofsalâh in Islam is like the position of the head in a body.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate from Abû ad-Dardâ’ : “My dear friend [Muhammad]  advised me saying: ‘Do not ascribe any partner to Allâh  even if you are cut up into pieces and even if you are burnt. Do not leave a prescribed salâh deliberately. He who leaves it out deliberately has freed himself from the protection [of Islam]. Do not consume alcohol because it is the key to all evil.’”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* and others narrate via a good chain of narrators from Ibn ‘Abbâs : “When I lost my eyesight, and my pupil was still

good, someone told me: ‘We can treat your eye but you will have to abandon salâh for a few days.’ I replied: ‘No. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘He who abandons salâh shall meet Allâh ﷻ while He is angry with him.’”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that a man came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Teach me a deed which, if I do, I will enter Paradise.” He said: “Do not ascribe any partner to Allâh ﷻ even if you are tortured and burnt. Obey your parents even if they remove you from your wealth and everything else that you own. Do not leave out salâh deliberately. Surely the protection of Allâh ﷻ leaves the person who leaves outsalâh deliberately.”

Another narration states: “Do not ascribe any partner to Allâh ﷻ even if you are killed and burnt. Do not disobey your parents even if they order you to leave your family and wealth. Do not leave out a prescribed salâh deliberately. Surely he who leaves out a prescribed salâh deliberately, then the protection of Allâh ﷻ leaves him. Do not consume alcohol for it is the basis of every immorality. Beware of disobedience for it is through disobedience that the wrath of Allâh ﷻ descends. Beware of fleeing from the battlefield. Even if the people are destroyed and even if death has overtaken them, you must remain steadfast. Spend on your family from your earnings. Do not refrain from using your stick on them when disciplining them. And make them fearful of Allâh ﷻ.”

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrates in his *Sahîh* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hasten with salâh on a cloudy day for surely he who abandons salâh has committed unbelief.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Umaymah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*, the freed slave woman of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, who said: “I was pouring the ablution water on the head of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when a man entered and said: ‘Advise me.’ He replied: ‘Do not ascribe any partner to Allâh ﷻ even if you are cut up into pieces and burnt by the fire. Do not

disobey your parents even if they order you to leave your family and worldly possessions. Do not consume alcohol for it is the key to every evil. Do not leave out a *salâh* deliberately. He who does that has lost the protection of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger.”

Abû Nu‘aym *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who abandons *salâh* deliberately, Allâh ﷻ writes his name on the door of the Hell-fire [and thereby includes him] among those who shall enter it.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who abandons *salâh* has lost his family and wealth.”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates from ‘Alî ؓ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O assembly of Quraysh! I take an oath by Allâh ﷻ that you will have to establish *salâh* and you will have to give the *zakâh* or else I will send a person to you who will chop off your necks for the sake of Islam.”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no share in Islam for he who has no *salâh*. And there is no *salâh* for he who has no ablution.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are four things which Allâh ﷻ made compulsory in Islam. He who fulfils three of them, they will not avail him in any way till he fulfils all four of them. They are: *salâh*, *zakâh*, fasting in the month of Ramadân, and the pilgrimage to the House.”

Al-Asbahânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who leaves out a *salâh* deliberately, Allâh ﷻ reduces his deeds to nothing and he loses the protection of Allâh ﷻ till he turns in repentance to Allâh ﷻ.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who abandons *salâh* has committed an open act of unbelief.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not abandon salâh deliberately. Surely he who abandons salâh deliberately is deprived of the protection of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.”

Ibn Abî Shaybah *rahimahullâh* and Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* in his *Târikh* narrate from ‘Alî ؓ: “He who does not offer salâh is an unbeliever.”

Muhammad ibn Nasr *rahimahullâh* and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr *rahimahullâh* narrate from Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ: “He who abandons salâh has committed unbelief.”

Ibn Nasr *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ: “He who abandons salâh has no Islam.”

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr *rahimahullâh* narrates from Jâbir ؓ: “He who does not offer salâh is an unbeliever.”

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr *rahimahullâh* and others narrate from Abû ad-Dardâ’ ؓ: “There is no îmân for he who has no salâh. And there is no salâh for he who has no ablution.”

Ibn Abî Shaybah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “He who abandons salâh has committed unbelief.”

Muhammad ibn Nadr *rahimahullâh* narrates: I heard Is-hâq *rahimahullâh* saying: It is authentically reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The person who abandons salâh is an unbeliever.” Similar was the opinion of those endowed with the knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ that the person who abandons salâh deliberately without any excuse to the extent that its time expires is an unbeliever. Ayyûb *rahimahullâh* said: “Abandoning salâh is unbelief. There is no difference of opinion in this.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ أَضَاعُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهْوَاتِ
فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ عَذَابًا إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ

“There came in their place successors who abandoned salâh and went after their lusts. They will, later on, see the deviation. Except him who repented...” (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 59-60)

Ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه said: “The words ‘abandoned salâh’ do not mean that they abandoned salâh totally. Rather, it means that they delayed them from their prescribed times.”

Sa‘îd ibn al-Musayyib *rahimahullâh*, the leading personality from the *Tâbi‘ûn*, said: “It means that a person does not offer the *zuhr salâh* to such an extent that the ‘*asr salâh*’ enters. He does not offer the ‘*asr salâh*’ to such an extent that the *maghrib salâh* enters. He does not offer the *maghrib salâh* to such an extent that the ‘*ishâ salâh*’ enters. He does not offer the ‘*ishâ salâh*’ to such an extent that the *fajr salâh* enters. He does not offer the *fajr salâh* to such an extent that the sun rises. He who passes away while persisting in this condition and having not repented, then Allâh ﷻ threatens him with *Ghayy* which is a valley in Hell. It is extremely deep and its punishment is very severe.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ
ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

“O believers! Let not your wealth and your children make you oblivious to the remembrance of Allâh. Whoever does this, it is such people who are in loss.” (Sûrah al-Munâfiqûn, 63: 9)

A group of commentators says that the words “the remembrance of Allâh” in this context refer to the five salâhs. He who is preoccupied with his wealth, either by engaging in transactions with it, engaged in his craft, or busy with his children, and therefore does not offer the salâh at its prescribed time, then he is from among those who are in loss.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The first thing that a person will have to give an account of from his deeds is his salâh. If his salâh was in order, he will be successful and he will pass. But if there are any shortcomings in it, he will lose and fail.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

قَوْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

“Destruction to those who offer salâh: who are inattentive of theirsalâh.”
(al-Mâ‘ûn, 107: 4-5)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “They are the ones who delay thesalâh from its prescribed time.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and IbnHibbân *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentioned salâh on one day. He said: “He who safeguards it, it will be a source of light, a proof, and salvation for him on the day of resurrection. He who does not safeguard it, it will neither be a source of light, a proof, nor a salvation for him. On the day of resurrection he will be with Qârûn, Pharaoh, Hâmân and Ubayy ibn Khalaf.”

The ‘ulamâ’ state that he will be resurrected with these people because: if he was kept away from salâh because of his wealth, he is similar to Qârûn. He will therefore be resurrected with him. If he was kept away from salâh because of his kingdom, he is similar to Pharaoh. He will therefore be resurrected with him. If he was kept away from salâh because of his ministerial occupations, he is similar to Hâmân. He will therefore be resurrected with him. If he was kept away from salâh because of his business, he is similar to Ubayy ibn Khalaf, a trader from the unbelievers of Makkah. He will therefore be resurrected with him.

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates from Sa‘d ibn Abî Waqqâs ؓ who said: I asked the Prophet ﷺ about the following words of Allâh ﷻ:

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

“who are inattentive of their salâh.” (al-Mâ‘ûn, 107: 5)

He replied: “They are the ones who delay the salâh from its prescribed time.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates from Mus‘ab ibn Sa‘d who said: I asked my father: “O my beloved father! These words of Allâh ﷻ state:

الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

“who are inattentive of their salâh.” (al-Mâ‘ûn, 107: 5)

“Now which of us does not become distracted and which of us does not stray in his salâh?” My father replied: “That is not what it means. It means delaying it from its prescribed time.”

The word *wayl* in the above verse refers to the severity of punishment. It is said that it also refers to a valley in Hell. If the mountains of the world were sent to it, they would all melt due to the severity of its heat. So it is the abode of he who is neglectful of salâh and delays it from its prescribed time. Unless he repents to Allâh ﷻ and expresses remorse over his excesses.

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrates in his *Sahîh* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He whom a salâh misses is as if he has lost his family and wealth.”

Imâm Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Abû dâ‘ûd *rahimahullâh*, Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who misses the “*asr salâh* is as if he has lost his family and wealth.”

Ibn Khuzaymah *rahimahullâh* adds in his *Sahîh*: Imâm Mâlik *rahimahullâh* says that this refers to the expiry of the salâh time. Imâm an-Nasa’î

rahimahullâh says that from among the salâhs there is a salâh which, if a person misses, it is as if he has lost his family and wealth. It refers to the “*asr salâh*.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and Imâm an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* say that the “*asr salâh* was presented to all the nations before you, but they neglected it. Therefore, he who safeguards it today shall receive a double reward. And there is no salâh after it till the stars begin to appear [in other words, only after sunset is there a salâh after the ‘*asr salâh*].

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who leaves out the ‘*asr salâh* has destroyed all his deeds.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Abî Shaybah *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who leaves the ‘*asr salâh* till its time expires has destroyed all his deeds.”

Ibn Abî Shaybah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who leaves out the ‘*asr salâh* without an excuse till the sun sets has destroyed all his deeds.”

‘Abd ar-Razzâq *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “For one of you to lose his family and wealth is better for him than the time of ‘*asr salâh* passing by him.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who deliberately leaves out the ‘*asr salâh* till the sun sets is as if he destroyed his family and wealth.”

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates that Samurah ibn Jundub ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would very often ask his Companions: ‘Did any of you see a dream?’ So he whom Allâh ﷻ willed would relate his dream to him. One morning, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to us: ‘Two people came to me last night. They were sent to me. They said to me: ‘Come, let’s go.’ I went with them. We reached a man who was lying down while

another man was standing over him with a rock. The man suddenly struck his head with the rock. The rock rolled away. The one who struck the other followed the rock and brought it back. By the time he reached the man [who he had struck], his head returned to its normal state. The thrower then did the same as he had done the first time. I asked my two companions: "Glory be to Allâh! What is this?" They said to me: "Proceed."

We proceeded till we came to a man lying flat on his back. Another man was standing over him with a steel hook. He suddenly inserts the hook on one side of the man's mouth and tears off his mouth towards his back, his nose towards his back and his eyes towards his back. He then goes to the other side of his mouth and does just as he had done to the first side. He barely finishes with the second side when the first side returns to its original state. So he goes back to the first side and does the same as he had done before. I asked my two companions: "Glory be to Allâh! What is this?" They said to me: "Proceed."

We proceeded till we came to something that looked like an oven. The narrator says: "I think that the Prophet ﷺ said: "There was much noise and clamour in it." We looked into it and saw many naked men and women. Suddenly a flame of fire came to them from beneath. When it reached them, they began screaming in terror. I asked my two companions: "Who are these people?" They said to me: "Proceed."

We proceeded till we came to a river. The narrator says: "I think that the Prophet ﷺ said: "It was red like blood." In the river was a man who was swimming. On the bank of the river was another man who had gathered many rocks. When the swimmer approached the bank, the man would throw a rock into his mouth and the swimmer would swim away. The swimmer would then return and the man would do the same. I asked my two companions: "What is this?" They said to me: "Proceed."

We proceeded till we came to a hideous looking man – the most hideous looking person you ever set your eyes on. There was a fire near him which he was kindling and walking around. I asked my two companions: "What is this?" They said to me: "Proceed."

We proceeded till we came to a garden having tall and lofty plants, and all the colours of spring. In the middle of the garden was a tall man. I could not even see his head because of his extreme height. Around him were the largest number of children I ever saw. I asked my two companions: "What is this? Who are these people?" They said to me: "Proceed."

We proceeded till we came to a massive garden. I never saw a garden bigger and more beautiful than it. My two companions said to me: "Go up." We ascended to it till we reached a city built with alternating bricks of gold and silver. We went to the gate of the city and asked for it to be opened. It was opened for us and we entered it. Some men met us: half their bodies were as handsome as the most handsome person you have ever seen, while the other half of their bodies were as ugly as the ugliest person you have ever seen. My two companions said to them: "Go and throw yourselves in that river." There was a river flowing across the city whose water was pure white. They went and threw themselves into the river. They then returned to us with that ugliness which they had completely vanished. They now had the most beautiful appearance.

My two companions said to me: "This is the Garden of Eden and this is your abode." I raised my eyes and saw a palace like a white cloud. They said to me: "This is your abode." I said to them: "May Allâh ﷻ bless you. Let me enter it." They said: "You may not enter it now, but you will certainly enter it [one day]."


I said to them: "I saw many astonishing things tonight. What are all these things that I saw?" They replied: "We will inform you: As for the first man you came upon, whose head was repeatedly struck by a rock, he is a person who studies the Qur'ân but then does not practise on its teachings and remains asleep when it is the time for the prescribed salâh."


"As for the man whom you came upon with the sides of his mouth, nostrils and eyes being torn towards his back, he is a person who leaves his house in the morning and tells a lie that spreads throughout the world."


"As for the naked men and women who were in that structure like an oven, they are adulterers and adulteresses."


“As for the man whom you came upon in the river, swimming and swallowing a rock, he is the one who devours usury.”



“As for the hideous looking man you saw kindling a fire and walking around it, he is Mâlik, the gatekeeper of Hell.”


“As for the tall man whom you saw in the garden, he is Ibrâhîm .



“As for the children who were around him, they are those who pass away on the *fitrah* (the natural religion of Allâh .

Some Muslims asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What about the children of the polytheists?” The Messenger of Allâh  replied: “The children of the polytheists as well.”

“As for those people whose half bodies were beautiful and the other half ugly, they are those who committed acts that were good and other acts that were evil. Allâh  pardoned them.”

The Hadîth of al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* states: The Prophet  then came upon a people whose heads were shattered by rocks. Each time they were shattered, they returned to their original state. This continued again and again. He  asked: “O Jibra’îl! Who are these people?” He replied: “They are those whose heads felt very heavy from offering salâh.” [In other words, they felt it very burdensome to offer salâh].

Al-Khatîb *rahimahullâh* and Ibn an-Najjâr *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “The flag of Islam is salâh. He who devotes his heart to it and safeguards it within its limits, at its prescribed times, and with its Sunnah acts, is a true believer.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that Allâh  said [to the Messenger of Allâh ]: “I made five salâhs compulsory on your *ummah* and I made a promise to Myself that he who safeguards them by offering them at their prescribed times, I will admit him into Paradise. As for he who does not safeguard them, he enjoys no such promise from Me.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who knows that salâh is a compulsory obligation on him and fulfils it shall enter Paradise.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The first thing that a person will be taken to account for on the day of resurrection from his deeds is salâh. If his salâh is in order, he passed and succeeded. If it is not in order, he failed and lost. If there is any shortcoming in his compulsory salâh, Allâh ﷻ will say: ‘Check if My servant has any optional salâh.’ The optional salâh will then be used to complete the shortcomings in his compulsory salâh. All his other deeds will be reckoned in the same way.”

Imam an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The first thing that a person will be taken to account for on the day of resurrection from his deeds is salâh. And the first judgement that will be passed among people will be with regard to the shedding of blood.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Abû Dâ’ûd *rahimahullâh*, Imâm an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The first thing that a person will be taken to account for on the day of resurrection will be his salâh. If he offered them in totality, they will be recorded in totality in his favour. If he did not offer them in totality, Allâh ﷻ will say to His angels: ‘See if you can find an optional salâh for My servant.’ They will use them to complete his compulsory salâhs. The same will be done for zakâh. Thereafter all the other deeds will be taken into account in like manner.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The first thing that a person will be questioned about will be his salâh. If it was in order, he will be successful. If it was not in order, he will be lost and ruined.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh*, Imâm an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The first thing that the people will be taken to account for from their deeds on the day of resurrection will be salâh. Our Sustainer will say to His angels – despite knowing best – look at the salâh of My servant. Did he fulfil it completely or did he display shortcomings in it?' If it was fulfilled in totality, it will be recorded in totality. If he left out anything from it, He will say: 'See if My servant has any optional salâh. If he has any optional salâh, complete his compulsory salâh with it.' All the other deeds will be accounted in the same manner."

At-Tayâlisî *rahimahullâh*, at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and ad-Diyâ'î in *al-Mukhtârah* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Jibra'îl عليه السلام came to me from Allâh عز وجل and said: 'O Muhammad! Allâh عز وجل says: 'I made five salâhs compulsory on your *ummah*. He who fulfils them with their ablution, at their prescribed times, with their bowing and prostrating postures, then he has a promise that I will enter him into Paradise. And he who meets Me having left out anything thereof, he has no promise from Me. I may punish him or I may have mercy on him.'"

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates: "Salâh has a scale. He who fulfils it has sought to fill the scale."

Ad-Daylamî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Salâh blackens the face of Satan, charity breaks his back, mutual love for the sake of Allâh عز وجل and intense love for knowledge eradicates him completely. If you do all this, he [Satan] will distance himself away from you like the distance between the east and west."

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Continue fearing Allâh عز وجل, offer your five salâhs, fast in your month [of Ramadân], give the zakâh of your wealth, and obey those of authority among you; you will enter the Paradise of your Sustainer."

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* and Imâm an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The most beloved of deeds in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is salâh at its prescribed time, then obedience to parents, and then waging jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ."

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates from 'Umar ؓ who said: A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked: "O Messenger of Allâh! Which deeds are most beloved to Allâh ﷻ in Islam?" He replied: "Salâh at its prescribed time. He who abandons salâh has no Islam. Salâh is the pillar of Islam."

When 'Umar ؓ was stabbed, someone said to him: "It is the time of salâh, O leader of the believers!" He said: "What a wonderful thing salâh is. Listen! There is no share in Islam for any person who abandons salâh." 'Umar ؓ offered salâh while his wound was flowing with blood.

Adh-Dhahabî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "When a person offers salâh at the beginning of its time, it ascends the sky with light till it reaches the Throne. It then seeks forgiveness for the person till the day of resurrection. It says to him: 'May Allâh ﷻ safeguard you as you safeguarded me.' When a person offers it out of its prescribed time, it ascends the sky while covered in darkness. When it reaches the sky, it is flung back just as a worn out garment is flung aside. The person's face is then struck with it."

Imâm Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "There are three people whose salâh Allâh ﷻ does not accept." From among them he enumerated the person who offers salâh after the expiry of the time.

Some scholars say that it is related in the Hadîth that he who safeguards salâh, Allâh ﷻ honours him with five things: (1) a constricted [and difficult] life is removed from him, (2) the punishment of the grave is raised from him, (3) Allâh ﷻ will give him his book of deeds in his right hand,

(4) he will cross the *Sirât* with the speed of lightning, (5) he will enter Paradise without reckoning.

As for he who is neglectful of *salâh*, Allâh ﷻ will punish him with 15 forms of punishment: five in this world, three at the time of death, three in his grave, three when he comes out of his grave.

As for those that he will suffer in this world, they are: (1) blessing will be taken out of his life, (2) the characteristics of the righteous will be wiped off his face [the radiance and illumination that we see on the faces of the righteous will be removed from his face], (3) Allâh ﷻ will not reward him for every deed that he does, (4) his supplications will not be raised to the heavens [i.e. they will not be accepted], (5) he will enjoy no share in the supplications of the righteous.

As for those that he will suffer at the time of death, they are: (1) he will die disgracefully, (2) he will die hungry, (3) he will die thirsty. Even if he were given to drink the oceans of the earth, his thirst will not be quenched.

As for those that he will suffer in his grave, they are: (1) the grave will constrict upon him to such an extent that his ribs will interlock with each other, (2) the grave will be turned into a fire and he will turn and twist on hot embers by night and day, (3) a serpent will be imposed upon him in his grave. Its name is *ash-Shujâ‘ al-Aqra‘*. Its eyes are of fire and its fangs of steel. The length of each fang is equal to one days journey. It will bite the deceased saying: “I am *ash-Shujâ‘ al-Aqra‘*.” Its voice will be like the clapping of thunder. It will say: “My Sustainer ordered me that I should strike you for neglecting the *fajr salâh* till sunrise, that I should strike you for neglecting the *zuhr salâh* till the ‘*asr salâh*, that I should strike you for neglecting the ‘*asr salâh* till the *maghrib salâh*, that I should strike you for neglecting the *maghrib salâh* till the ‘*ishâ salâh*, that I should strike you for neglecting the ‘*ishâ salâh* till the *fajr salâh*.” Each time it strikes him, he goes 70 feet deeper into the ground. He will be continuously punished in the grave till the day of resurrection.

As for those that he will suffer when he comes out of his grave, they are: (1) a very severe reckoning of deeds, (2) the wrath of Allâh ﷻ, (3) entry into the Hell-fire.

Another narration states: he will come on the day of resurrection with three lines of writing on his face. The first line will read: "O you who destroyed the right of Allâh!" The second line will read: "O you who have specifically earned the wrath of Allâh!" The third line will read: "Just as you destroyed the right of Allâh in the world, today you can remain despondent of the mercy of Allâh."

The explanation of the previous Hadîth does not coincide with the fifteen forms of punishment. The explanation gives fourteen forms of punishment [and not fifteen]. It is possible that the narrator forgot the fifteenth one.

Ibn 'Abbâs ؓ narrates: "When it is the day of resurrection, a man will be brought forward and made to stand before Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ will order that he be taken to the Hell-fire. He will ask: "O my Sustainer! On what account is this?" Allâh ﷻ will reply: "On account of your delaying the salâh from its prescribed time, and for your taking false oaths in My name."

It is also related that one day, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to his Companions: "Say: O Allâh! Do not leave a wretched and deprived person among us." He then asked: "Do you know who a wretched and deprived person is?" They asked: "Who is he, O Messenger of Allâh?" He replied: "The one who abandons salâh."

It is also related that the first whose faces will be blackened on the day of resurrection will be those who abandoned salâh. And that there is a valley in Hell which is called Lamlam. There are numerous serpents in it. They are as thick as the neck of a camel and long as one month's journey. They will bite the person who abandoned salâh. Their poison will boil in his body for 70 years and his flesh will then turn yellow.

It is related that a woman from the Banî Isrâ'îl came to Mûsâ ؑ and said: "O Prophet of Allâh! I have committed a serious sin and I already turned to

Allâh ﷻ in repentance. Supplicate to Allâh ﷻ that He forgives me my sin and accepts my repentance.” Mûsâ ﷺ asked her: “What sin did you commit?” She replied: “O Prophet of Allâh! I committed adultery, I gave birth to a child [from that unlawful act] and I killed that child.” Mûsâ ﷺ said to her: “Get out from here, O you shameless woman, lest a fire descends from the sky and burns all of us because of your evil.” She left and went away with a broken heart. Jibra’îl ﷺ descended and said: “O Mûsâ! Allâh ﷻ is asking you: ‘Why did you reject that repentant woman, O Mûsâ? Have you not come across anyone worse than her?’ Mûsâ ﷺ replied: ‘O Jibra’îl! Who can be worse than her?’ He said: ‘He who deliberately leaves out a salâh.’”

It is related from the past scholars that a person buried his sister who had passed away. While he was doing that, his bag of money fell into her grave. He did not notice this till he left her grave. When he remembered it, he returned to the grave and dug it open after all the people had gone. He found the grave in a blazing fire. He covered the grave with the soil and returned to his mother, crying and very sad. He said to her: “O my beloved mother! Tell me about my sister and what she used to do.” The mother asked: “What is the reason for your question about her?” He replied: “O my beloved mother! I saw her grave in a blazing fire.” The mother also began crying and said: “O my son! Your sister was neglectful of salâh and she used to delay it from its prescribed time.”

If this is the condition of the person who delays the salâh from its prescribed time, what can be said of the condition of the person who does not offer salâh?! We ask Allâh ﷻ to help us to safeguard salâh in the most complete way at its prescribed times. Surely Allâh ﷻ is most generous, kind, merciful.

ON THE PUNISHMENT OF HELL

Allâh ﷻ says:

لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِّكُلِّ بَابٍ مِنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَّقْسُومٌ

“It has seven gates. For each of those gates is a group assigned.” (Sûrah al-Hijr, 15: 44)

The word *juz* in this verse could refer to a faction, a group, a section. It is said that the gates refers to different levels. Ibn Jurayj *rahimahullâh* said: “The Hell-fire has seven storeys: (1) *Jahannam* – Hell, (2) *Lazâ* – blazing fire, (3) *al-Hutamah* – a vehement fire that breaks into pieces everything that is cast into it, (4) *as-Sa ‘îr* – blazing flame, (5) *Saqar* – a name for Hell which literally refers to a fire that burns and melts, (6) *al-Jahîm* – a great fire in a pit, (7) *al-Hâwiyah* – a bottomless pit.

The uppermost storey is for those who believe in Allâh ﷻ as one, the second storey is for the Jews, the third storey is for the Christians, the fourth storey is for the Sabeans, the fifth storey is for the Mageans, the sixth storey is for the polytheists, and the seventh storey is for the hypocrites. *Jahannam* is thus the uppermost storey and the other storeys are below it.

The meaning of the verse is that Allâh ﷻ will separate the followers of Satan into seven groups. Each group and each section will enter a specific storey of Hell. The reason for this is that there are diverse stages of unbelief and acts of disobedience. Their ranks in the Hell-fire will therefore be diverse.

It is said that Hell is made into seven gates in order to coincide with the seven parts of the body: the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the stomach, the private part, the hand and the leg. Since it is from these parts that sins originate, their abodes are these seven gates.

‘Alî ؓ said: “The levels of Hell are seven. They are one on top of the other. The first will be filled first, then the second, then the third, till all are filled.”

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* in his *Târikh* and Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrate from Ibn ‘Umar ؓ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hell has seven gates one of which is for he who unsheathes his sword on my *ummah*.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates in *al-Awsat* that Jibra’îl ؑ came to the Prophet ﷺ at a time when he did not normally come to him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stood up and said: “O Jibra’îl! How is it that I see your colour has changed?” He replied: “I did not come to you till Allâh ﷻ commanded the bellows of the fire.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Jibra’îl! Describe the Hell-fire to me, or describe Hell.” Jibra’îl ؑ said: “Allâh ﷻ ordered Hell to be ignited for one thousand years till it turned white. He then ordered it to be ignited for another thousand years till it turned red. He then ordered it to be ignited for another thousand years till it turned black. It is thus pitch black. Its sparks do not give off light nor do its flames subside. I take an oath by that Being who sent you as a Prophet with the truth, that even if Hell was opened to the extent of the eye of a needle, all those who are on earth would die. I take an oath by that being who sent you with the truth, if one of the guards of Hell were to appear before the inhabitants of earth, all those who are on earth would die because of the hideous looking faces and terrible stench of these guards. I take an oath by that Being who sent you with the truth, that if a single link from the chain of the inmates of Hell which Allâh ﷻ described in His Book, were to be placed on the mountains of earth, they would all be dispersed and they would continue sinking into the ground till they reached the lowest level of earth.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “This is enough for me, O Jibra’îl! I do not want to hear more, or else my heart will be shattered and I will die.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then looked at Jibra’îl ؑ and saw him crying. He said: “O Jibra’îl! You are crying while you enjoy such a lofty

position in the sight of Allâh!?” He replied: “Why should I not cry when I am most rightful to cry? It is possible that in the knowledge of Allâh ﷻ I am not in the position that I am presently in. I do not know that I may be put through a test that Satan was put through. For he certainly used to be among the angels. I do not know that I may be put through a test that Hârût and Mârût were put through.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ began crying and Jibra’îl ﷺ also cried. They continued crying till an announcement was made to them: “O Jibra’îl! And O Muhammad! Allâh ﷻ has certainly secured both of you from disobeying Him.” Jibra’îl ﷺ then ascended and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ appeared. He went pass a group of Ansâr who were laughing and playing. He said to them: “Are you laughing when Hell is beyond you?! If you only knew what I know, you would laugh little and cry profusely, you would not enjoy food and drink, and you would go out into the fields and cry before Allâh ﷻ.”

An announcement was made: “O Muhammad! Do not make My servants despondent. I sent you as a giver of glad tidings and not as a person to put people into difficulty.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Continue doing good deeds and remain balanced.” [i.e. do not go to extremes].

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked Jibra’îl ﷺ: “How is it that I never saw Mîkâ’îl laughing?” He replied: “Mîkâ’îl never laughed ever since the Hell-fire was created.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hell will be brought on the day of resurrection with 70 000 reins. Each rein will be pulled by 70 000 angels.”

ALSO ON THE PUNISHMENT OF HELL

Imâm Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh*, Imâm an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* and Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrate: “When Allâh ﷻ created Paradise and Hell, He sent Jibra'îl عليه السلام to Paradise saying: ‘Look at it and see what I prepared therein for its inhabitants.’ So he went, looked at it, and at all that Allâh ﷻ prepared therein for its inhabitants. He returned to Allâh ﷻ and said: ‘By Your honour, anyone who hears of it will certainly enter it.’ Allâh ﷻ then ordered it to be surrounded by difficulties. He then said to Jibra'îl عليه السلام: ‘Go back and see what I prepared therein for its inhabitants.’ Jibra'îl عليه السلام went back and saw that it is surrounded by difficulties. He returned to Allâh ﷻ and said: ‘By Your honour, I fear that none will enter it.’ Allâh ﷻ said: ‘Go and look at Hell and all that I prepared therein for its inmates.’ Jibra'îl عليه السلام looked at it and saw that it is stacked one above the other. He returned to Allâh ﷻ and said: ‘By Your honour, anyone who hears of it will never want to enter it.’ Allâh ﷻ then ordered it to be surrounded by desires. He then said to Jibra'îl عليه السلام: ‘Go back and see it.’ He went back, [looked at it] and said: ‘By Your honour, I fear that every single person will enter it.’”

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn Mas'ûd رضي الله عنه with regard to the following words of Allâh ﷻ:

إِنَّهَا تُرْمَى بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ

“That fire throws sparks [as huge] as castles.” (Sûrah al-Mursalât, 77: 32)

He said: “Listen! I am not saying that they are like trees. Rather, they are as huge as forts and cities.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of

Allâh ﷺ said: “Wayl is the name of a valley in Hell. An unbeliever will continue falling into it for 40 years before he can reach its bottom.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Wayl is the name of a valley in Hell. It is between two mountains. An unbeliever will continue falling into it for 70 years before he can reach its bottom.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from the pit of grief.” The Companions y asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is the pit of grief?” He replied: “It is a valley in Hell from which Hell itself seeks refuge 400 times every day.” He was asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who will enter it?” He replied: “Those who recite the Qur’ân and show off with their deeds. The most detested reciters of the Qur’ân in the sight of Allâh ﷻ are those who visit the tyrant rulers.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is a valley in Hell from which Hell itself seeks refuge 400 times every day. It is prepared for those who show off from the *umma* of Muhammad ﷺ.”

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ *rahimahullâh* narrates: “There are 70 000 valleys in Hell. Each valley has 70 000 pits. Each pit has 70 000 holes. There is a snake in each of these holes. They will eat the faces of the inmates of Hell.”

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates in his *Târîkh*: “There are 70 000 valleys in Hell. Each valley has 70 000 pits. Each pit has 70 000 rooms. Each room has 70 000 sub-rooms. Each sub-room has 70 000 wells. Each well has 70 000 snakes. The jawbone of each snake has 70 000 scorpions. The unbeliever or hypocrite will have to pass through every single one of all these.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A huge rock will be thrown into the edge of Hell. It will continue falling into it for 70 years and it will still not reach its bottom.”

‘Umar رضي الله عنه used to say: “Remember the Hell-fire abundantly for its heat is intense, its depth is very far, and it has hooks of steel.”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh*, Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân*rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a rock were to be thrown into Hell, it would continue falling for 70 years till it reached the bottom.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said: “We were in the company of the Prophet ﷺ when we heard a loud sound.” The Prophet ﷺ asked: “Do you know what this is?” We replied: “Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ know best.” He said: “This is a rock which Allâh ﷻ sent into Hell 70 years ago. It is only now that it reached the bottom.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî رضي الله عنه who said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard a sound that terrified him. Jibra’îl عليه السلام came to him, so the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “What is this sound, O Jibra’îl?” He replied: “It is a rock which fell from the edge of Hell 70 years ago. It is now that it reached the bottom. Allâh ﷻ willed that you hear its sound.” Ever since that day, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was never seen laughing with his full mouth till Allâh ﷻ took his life away.

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a pellet the size of this – and he pointed to a skull – were thrown from the sky to earth, which is a distance of a journey of 500 years, it would reach before the night sets in. If it were sent from the head of the chain [in Hell], it would travel for 40 years before it reaches its origin.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim*rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a steel hook of Hell were to be placed on earth, and all of mankind and jinn got together to lift it, they would not be able to do it.”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a steel hook of Hell were to strike a mountain, it will shatter and be reduced to dust.”

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a single rock of Hell were to be placed on the mountains of earth, they would all melt. Each human in Hell will have a rock and Satan with him.”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The seven earths are between each earth. The distance between each one is equal to a journey of 500 years. The highest of these earths is on the back of a fish whose two ends meet in the sky. The fish is on a rock, and the rock is in the hand of an angel.”

“The second earth is the prison of wind. When Allâh ﷻ decided to destroy the people of ‘Âd, He ordered the guard of the wind to send a wind on them which would destroy them. The guard asked: ‘O my Sustainer! Should I send them a wind that is equal in size to the nostril of an ox?’ Allâh ﷻ said to him: ‘If you are going to release so much of wind on them, the entire earth and all those who are on it will be completely annihilated. Instead, send a wind that is equal in size to that of a ring.’” This is what is referred to in the following verses:

وَبِئْسَ عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيحَ الْعَقِيمَ. مَا تَذَرُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ كَالرَّمِيمِ

“There is a sign in the ‘Âd when We sent upon them a wind devoid of any goodness. It did not leave anything which it came across without having reduced it to bits.” (Sûrah adh-Dhâriyât, 51: 41-42)

“The third earth contains the rocks of Hell.”

“The fourth rock contains the matches of Hell. The Companions yasked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Does the Hell-fire have matches?’ He replied: ‘Yes. I

take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, it has valleys of matches. If mighty mountains were sent into it, they would all melt.”

“The fifth earth contains the snakes of Hell. Their mouths are like valleys. They will bite an unbeliever just once and no flesh will remain on his bones.”

“The sixth earth contains the scorpions of Hell. The smallest of them is like a saddled mule. It will strike an unbeliever just once and he will forget the intense heat of Hell.”

“The seventh earth contains Satan enchained in steel. One hand is in front of him and the other is behind him. When Allâh ﷻ wills to free anyone from His servants, He frees him.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are in Hell-fire snakes as thick as the neck of camels. One of them will bite a person and he will experience the heat of its poison for 70 years. There are in Hell-fire scorpions as huge as saddled mules. One of them will bite a person and he will experience its heat for 40 years.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to these words of Allâh ﷻ: “water like pus” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 29). That it is like the sediment of oil. When this water is brought close to his face, the skin of his face will fall into it.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that boiling water will be poured on their heads. The boiling water will penetrate till it reaches their bellies. It will pull out all that is in their bellies till it passes through their feet, all completely melted. It will then be returned as it was. [This process will be repeated again and again].

Ad-Dahhâk *rahimahullâh* said: “This boiling water (*al-hamîm*) is boiling from the time Allâh ﷻ created the heavens and the earth. It will continue

boiling till they are made to drink it and it is poured onto their heads.”

Some scholars are of the opinion that this *al-hamîm* is the tears from their eyes. These tears collect in the pools of Hell and they are then made to drink it. Other opinions are also given in this regard. Allâh ﷻ refers to it as follows:

وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعُ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ

“and are given to drink boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels.” (Sûrah Muhammad, 47: 15)

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to the following words of Allâh ﷻ:

وَيُسْقَى مِنْ مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ، يَنْجَرَعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِيعُهُ

“He takes it in gulps but is unable to swallow it.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 17)

He ﷺ said: “It will be brought close to his mouth. He will dislike it. When it is brought closer, his face will get grilled and his scalp will fall off. When he drinks it, it will cut his bowels till it comes out from his posterior.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعُ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ

“and are given to drink boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels.” (Sûrah Muhammad, 47: 15)

وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهُ ط يَذُفُّنَ الشَّرَابُ

“If they ask for help, they will be given water like pus which would scald the faces. What a dreadful drink...” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 29)

Imâm Ahmâd *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a bucket of *ghassâq* (flowing pus) were to be poured onto the world, all the inhabitants of the world will start stinking. This *ghassâq* is mentioned in the Qur’ân as follows:

فَلْيَلْزُقُوهُ حَمِيمًا وَعَسَاقًا

“This is it. Now let them taste it – boiling water and flowing pus.” (Sûrah Sâd, 38: 57)

إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَعَسَاقًا

“Only boiling water and flowing pus.” (Sûrah an-Naba’, 78: 25)

There is difference of opinion with regard to this flowing pus. According to Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ it refers to the liquids that flow from the bodies of the unbelievers. According to others, it refers to their pus and matter. Ka’b *rahimahullâh* said: “It is a spring in Hell towards which the venom of every venomous creature, like snakes and scorpions, flows. It then becomes impure and foul through stagnation. A human is brought and dipped into it just once and then removed. By this mere single dip, his skin and flesh fall off his bones. His skin and flesh attach themselves to his heels and ankles, and he drags his flesh as a person drags his clothing.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ recited this verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

“O believers! Continuously fear Allâh as He ought to be feared and do not die except as Muslims.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 102)

He ﷺ then said: “If a drop from the *zaqqûm* tree (an infernal tree in Hell having bitter fruit) were to fall into this world, it would destroy the livelihoods of all the inhabitants of the world. What, then, can be said of the

person whose food this will be?!” Another narration states: “What, then, can be said of the person whose only food will be this?!”

Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه said with regard to the following words of Allâh عز وجل:

وَطَعَانًا ذَا عُصَّةٍ

“And food that chokes in the throat.” (Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 13)

He said: “It refers to a thorn that gets stuck in the throat. It can neither go down the throat nor can it come out of the throat.”

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The distance between the two shoulders of an unbeliever will be equivalent to three days journey undertaken by a swift rider.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates: “The molar tooth of an unbeliever will be as huge as Mt. Uhud. His thigh will be like al-Baydâ’.” And it is a mountain. “His seat in Hell will be like the distance between Qadîd and Makkah.” In other words, approximately three days journey. “The thickness of his skin will be 24 feet, according to the measurement of al-Jabbâr.” In other words, according to the measurement of a king in Yemen whose foot measurement is well known. As explained by Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and others. Others are of the opinion that it is the well known measurement of a non-Arab king.

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The molar tooth, or he said, the incisor, of an unbeliever will be as huge as Mt. Uhud. And the thickness of his skin will be equal to three days journey.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection, the molar tooth of an unbeliever will be as huge as Mt. Uhud, his thigh will be like al-Baydâ’, his seat in Hell will be a distance of three days from ar-Rabdhah.” In other words, the distance between Madînah and ar-Rabdhah.

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection, the molar tooth of an unbeliever will be as huge as Mt. Uhud, the thickness of his skin will be 70 feet, his upper arm will be like al-Baydâ’, his thigh will be like Warqân, his seat in Hell will be the distance between me and ar-Rabdhah.”

Another narration states: “His seat in Hell will be a distance of three days from ar-Rabdhah.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrate from al-Fudayl ibn Yazîd that the unbeliever will drag his tongue which will be one and two parasangs long and the people will trample it. Al-Fudayl ibn Yazîd narrates from Abû al-‘Ajalân that on the day of resurrection, the unbeliever will drag his tongue which will be two parasangs long and the people will trample it. This is narrated by al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* and it is correct.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “The inmates of the Hell-fire will be so huge that the distance between the ear lobe and shoulder of one of them will be equal to a distance of 700 years, the thickness of his skin will be 70 feet, and his molar tooth will be like Mt. Uhud.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate from Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* that Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ asked: “Do you know what is the extent of Hell?” I replied: “No.” He said: “Indeed, you do not know. By Allâh you do not know that the distance between the ear lobe and shoulder of one of them is equal to a journey of 70 years. Valleys of pus and blood will flow in it.” I said: “Rivers [will flow].” He said: “No. Valleys will flow.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF FEARING SIN

You should know that the greatest deterrent from sins is the fear of Allâh ﷻ, fear of His retribution and might, and fear of His punishment, wrath and grasp. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“Let those who disobey his orders be fearful lest a disaster may befall them or a painful punishment may afflict them.” (Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 63)

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went to visit a youth while the latter was in the throes of death. He asked him: “How are you feeling?” He replied: “O Messenger of Allâh! I have hope in Allâh ﷻ and I fear my sins.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When these two qualities are found in a person at such a time, Allâh ﷻ most certainly gives him what he hopes for and secures him from what he fears.”

Wahb ibn al-Ward *rahimahullâh* said: “‘Îsâ عليه السلام used to say: ‘Love for al-Firdaus (the highest level of Paradise) and the fear of Hell enable a person to remain patient at the time of affliction and keep a person far from the pleasures, desires and sins of the world.’”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “By Allâh, there have passed before you such nations that if one of them were to spend the number of pebbles in gold, he will fear that he will not be saved because of the greatness of sin in his self.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Can you hear what I hear? The skies are shouting out and it is their right that they shout out. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, there is not a place equal to four fingers that is devoid of an angel prostrating to Allâh ﷻ, standing before Him or bowing to Him. If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and cry a

lot. You would come out, climb the mountains and cry before Allâh ﷻ out of fear of His mighty power and severe retribution.” Another narration states: “[You will cry out before Him because] you do not know whether you will be saved or not.”

Bakr ibn ‘Abdillâh al-Muzanî *rahimahullâh* said: “He who commits a sin while laughing will enter the Hell-fire while crying.”

A Hadîth states: “If a believer were to know every punishment of Allâh ﷻ, he will never feel secure from the Hell-fire.”

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate: “When this verse was revealed to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, ‘Warn your close relatives’ (Sûrah ash-Shu‘arâ’, 26: 214), he stood up and addressed the people saying: ‘O assembly of Quraysh! Purchase your selves from Allâh ﷻ for I cannot help you in any way from Allâh ﷻ. O Banî ‘Abd Manâf! I cannot help you in any way from Allâh ﷻ. O ‘Abbâd, the uncle of the Messenger of Allâh! I cannot help you in any way from Allâh ﷻ. O Safiyyah, the aunt of the Messenger of Allâh! I cannot help you in any way from Allâh ﷻ. O Fâtimâh, daughter of Muhammad! Ask me of my wealth whatever you like. I cannot help you in any way from Allâh ﷻ.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates that she said: “O Messenger of Allâh! [Allâh ﷻ says]: ‘Those who give whatever they [have to] give with their hearts trembling because they have to return to their Sustainer.’ O Messenger of Allâh! Does it refer to the person who commits adultery, steals and drinks alcohol, and fears Allâh ﷻ?” He replied: “No, O daughter of Abû Bakr! O daughter of as-Siddîq! Rather it refers to the person who offers salâh, who keeps fast and gives in charity, and fears that these good deeds are not accepted from him.”

Al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* was asked: “O Abû Sa‘îd! What should we do about sitting in the company of such people who talk to us about hope to such an extent that our hearts begin flying?” He replied: “By Allâh, it is better for you to be in the company of people who instil fear into you till

you enjoy security [Paradise] than to be in the company of people who make you at rest [and you feel so safe] that you eventually fall into terrors.”






When ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ was stabbed and his death approached, he said to his son: “Destruction to you! Place my cheek to the ground. May you have no mother. Destruction to me! And what destruction to me if He does not show mercy to me!” Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said to him: “What is this fear all about, O leader of the believers? Whereas Allâh ﷻ gave so many victories at your hands, conquered so many cities at your hands, and did that for you, and that for you?!” He replied: “If I am saved without anything against me nor anything for me is sufficient for me.” Another narration states: “Without any reward nor any burden.”





When Zany al-‘Âbidîn ibn ‘Alî ibn al-Husayn ؓ used to perform the *wudû’* and complete his *wudû’*, he would be overcome by trembling. Someone asked him the reason for this. He replied: “Destruction to you! Do you know before whom I am going to stand, and before whom I wish to converse with?”



Imâm Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullâh* said: “Fear prevents me from eating and drinking. I therefore have no desire for these.”



Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentioned seven people whom Allâh ﷻ will shade beneath the shade of His Throne on a day when there will be no shade except the shade provided by Him. Among them is a man who remembered Allâh ﷻ, in other words, he remembered the threats and punishment of Allâh ﷻ in solitude, and so his eyes teared out of fear of the sins which he committed and the acts of disobedience which he perpetrated.


Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “There are two eyes which the Hell-fire will not touch: an eye that cried in the dark of the night out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ and an eye that spent the night on guard in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”


Abû Hurayrah  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Every eye will be crying on the day of resurrection except [the following]: (1) an eye that lowered itself from looking at the prohibitions of Allâh , (2) an eye that remained awake in the cause of Allâh , and (3) an eye from which a single tear equal to the head of a fly is shed out of the fear of Allâh .

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Hurayrah  that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “A person who cries out of the fear of Allâh  will not enter the Hell-fire till the milk returns to the udders. And the dust that is acquired while in the cause of Allâh  and the smoke of Hell will never meet.”


‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âs  said: “I prefer shedding a single tear out of the fear of Allâh  to giving 1000 dînârs in charity.”

‘Aun ibn ‘Abdillâh said: “I have heard that when tears that are shed out of the fear of Allâh  fall on any place of his body, Allâh  will most certainly make that place forbidden to the Hell-fire.”

The chest of the Messenger of Allâh  used to make a buzzing sound like that of a pot placed on the fire, due to his crying.

Al-Kindî *rahimahullâh* said: “A single tear that is shed out of the fear of Allâh  extinguishes oceans of the Hell-fire.”

Ibn as-Simâk *rahimahullâh* used to reprimand his soul and say to it: “You utter the words of abstinent [pious and righteous] people but you do the deeds of hypocrites. Despite this, you still want to enter Paradise!!? This is impossible! This is impossible! There are other people for Paradise and they have deeds different from what we are doing.”

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said: “I went to Ja‘far as-Sâdiq and said to him: ‘O son of the Messenger of Allâh  ! Advise me.’ He replied: ‘O Sufyân! There is no respect for a liar. There is no rest for an envious person. There is no brotherliness for a person who is weary. There is no authority

for a person of bad character.’ I said: ‘O son of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ! Advise me more.’ He said: ‘O Sufyân! Abstain from the prohibitions of Allâh ﷻ and you will be an ‘âbid (an ardent worshipper of Allâh ﷻ). Be pleased with what Allâh ﷻ destined for you and you will be a Muslim. Deal with people as you would like them to deal with you and you will be a believer. Do not accompany an immoral person for he will teach you his immorality. [This is based on the Hadîth that a person is on the way of his friend. He should therefore be mindful of who he befriends]. Consult those who fear Allâh ﷻ in all your matters.’ I said: ‘O son of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ! Advise me more.’ He said: ‘O Sufyân! He who desires honour without a family and awe without any authority should come out of the disgrace of the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ and go towards His obedience.’ I said: ‘O son of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ! Advise me more.’ He said: ‘My father advised me with three things. He said: ‘O my son! He who remains in the company of an evil person is never safe. He who goes to an evil place is accused [i.e. is suspected of evil even if he does not commit it]. He who does not control his tongue regrets.’”

Ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh* said: “I asked Wuhayb ibn al-Ward: ‘Does the person who disobeys Allâh ﷻ experience the taste of worship?’ He replied: ‘No. Not even the person who intends to disobey Allâh ﷻ.’”

Abû al-Faraj ibn al-Jauzî *rahimahullâh* said: “Fear is the blazing fire that burns the desires. Its virtue is thus based on how much desires it burns, how much it prevents a person from disobedience, and how much it prompts a person towards obedience.”

How, then, can fear not be a virtue when it is through fear that one acquires chastity, abstinence, piety, exerting oneself in good, and virtuous deeds with which the proximity of Allâh ﷻ is enjoyed?! This is learnt from verses of the Qur’ân and the Ahâdîth. For example:

Allâh ﷻ says:

هٰذِي وَرَحْمَةً لِّلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ

“guidance and mercy for those who fear their Sustainer.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 154)

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

“Allâh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. This awaits he who fears his Sustainer.” (Sûrah al-Bayyinah, 98: 8)

وَخَافُونَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“and fear Me if you are believers.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 175)

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ

“Whoever feared standing before his Sustainer, for him are two gardens.” (Sûrah ar-Rahmân, 55: 46)

سَيَذَكَّرُ مَنْ يَخْشَى

“He who has fear shall understand.” (Sûrah al-A‘lâ, 87: 10)

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

From among His servants, it is those who have understanding that fear Allâh.” (Sûrah Fâtir, 35: 28)

All the verses and Ahâdîth that refer to the virtues of knowledge in actual fact refer to the virtues of fear. This is because fear is the fruit of knowledge.

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When the body of a person trembles out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ, his sins fall off him just as dry leaves fall off a tree.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ said: ‘By My might, I will not combine two fears on My servant nor will I combine two securities on him. If he feels secure from Me in this world, I will instill fear in him on the day of resurrection. If he fears Me in this world, I will give him security on the day of resurrection.’”

Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî *rahimahullâh* said: “Every heart that does not have the fear of Allâh ﷻ is deserted.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

“None can be fearless of the plot of Allâh except those who are bound to perish.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 99)

ON THE VIRTUE OF REPENTANCE

There are many verses on the virtue of repentance. Some of them are as follows:

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“Repent to Allâh, all of you together, O believers! So that you may prosper.” (Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 31)

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ
إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا
فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَبْدُلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ط وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا،
وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا.

“Who invoke no other sovereign with Allâh and do not kill the soul which Allâh has forbidden except for a just cause. And they do not commit adultery. Whoever does that has fallen into sin The punishment will be doubled for him on the day of resurrection and he shall remain therein disgraced. Except he who repented and believed and did some good deeds – for it is for such that Allâh shall transform their bad deeds into good deeds. And Allâh is forgiving, merciful Whoever repents and does good deeds – he truly returns to Allâh.” (Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 68-71)

There are numerous Ahâdîth in this regard as well.

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ stretches out His hand at night so that He may accept the repentance of the person who committed sin during the day. And He stretches out His hand in the day so that He may accept the repentance of

the person who committed sin during the night. He will continue doing this till the sun rises from the west [i.e. just before the day of resurrection].”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is a door in the west whose width is equal to a journey of 40 or 70 years. Allâh ﷻ opened it for repentance on the day He created the heavens and the earth. He will not close it till the sun rises from it.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ placed a door for repentance in the west whose width is equal to a journey of 70 years. It will not be closed till the sun rises from it.” This is referred to in the following verse:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا

“The day when a sign of your Sustainer comes before them, believing will be of no avail to anyone.” (Sûrah al-An‘âm, 6: 158)

It is said that the previous narration and the one before it do not clearly state that this door will be raised, as expounded by al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh*.

A reply to this is that such statements are not said on the basis of one’s personal opinion. It will therefore be regarded as *marfû‘* (a statement that is attributed to the Prophet ﷺ without explicitly stating that he said so).

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Paradise has eight doors, seven of which are closed [at present] while one is open for repentance. It will remain open till the sun rises from that direction.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If you sin to the extent that your sins reach the skies, and then you repent, Allâh ﷻ will accept your repentance.”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “From the good fortune of a person is that he has a long life and Allâh ﷻ blesses him with repentance.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Every human is a sinner, and the best of sinners are those who repent.”

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person committed a sin. He said: ‘O my Sustainer! I committed a sin, so forgive me.’ Allâh ﷻ said to him: ‘My servant recognized that he has a Sustainer who forgives sins and who also punishes for sinning.’ So Allâh ﷻ forgave him. After some time he committed another sin. He said: ‘O my Sustainer! I committed another sin, so forgive me.’ Allâh ﷻ said to him: ‘My servant recognized that he has a Sustainer who forgives sins and who also punishes for sinning.’ So Allâh ﷻ forgave him. After some time he committed another sin. He said: ‘O my Sustainer! I committed another sin, so forgive me.’ Allâh ﷻ said to him: ‘My servant recognized that he has a Sustainer who forgives sins and who also punishes for sinning.’ Allâh ﷻ then said to him: ‘I have forgiven My servant. He may now do as he wills.’”

Al-Mundhirî *rahimahullâh* said: “The words ‘He may now do as he wills’ mean that as long as he commits a sin, seeks forgiveness, repents from it and does not repeat it, then he may do as he wills if this is how he continues. This is because each time he commits a sin, his repentance and seeking forgiveness are atonements for his sin. It would therefore not harm him. These words do not mean that he can commit a sin, and seek verbal forgiveness without uprooting it from his life. And then he commits it again. This is the repentance of liars.”

Several compilers of Hadîth narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a believer commits a sin, a black dot appears on his heart. If he repents, uproots that sin, and seeks forgiveness, then that black spot is polished off. But if he increases in his sinning, the black spots increase till

his heart is sealed by them. This is the rust which is referred to in the Qur'ân:

كَأَلٌ بَلَرَانٌ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“No such thing. Rather, that which they were earning has covered their hearts with rust.” (Sûrah al-Mutaffifîn, 83: 14)

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of a person as long as his soul does not reach his throat.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate from Mu'âdh ؓ who said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ took me by my hand and walked with me for about a mile. He then said: ‘O Mu'âdh! I advise you to constantly fear Allâh ﷻ, to speak the truth, to fulfil promises, to fulfil trusts, to abstain from breaching trusts, to show mercy to the orphan, to protect the rights of the neighbour, to suppress anger, to be soft in speech, to freely extend the *salâm* (the Islamic greeting of prayer), to remain attached to the imâm, to gain a deep understanding of the Qur'ân, to love the hereafter, to fear the reckoning, to curtail hopes, and to do good deeds. I prohibit you from being abusive to a Muslim, from affirming a liar, from belying an honest person, from disobeying the just imâm, and from causing corruption in the land. O Mu'âdh! Remember Allâh ﷻ at every tree and rock [i.e. wherever you may be], and follow every sin with repentance: if the sin was committed in private, the repentance should be in private, if the sin was committed in public, the repentance should be in public.”

Al-Asfahânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person repents from his sins, Allâh ﷻ causes his scribes [the angels who record his deeds] to forget his sins, and He also causes his limbs and places on earth [where those sins were committed] to forget his sins. This is so that when he meets Allâh ﷻ on the day of resurrection, he will have no witness from Allâh ﷻ as regards any sin.”

Al-Asfahânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who is remorseful awaits the mercy of Allâh ﷻ while the person who is proud [of his sins] awaits the wrath of Allâh ﷻ. O servants of Allâh! You should know that every person will have his deeds before him. He will not leave this world till he sees his good deeds and evil deeds. Deeds are judged by the final deeds that were done. The night and day are like animals that one rides. So ride them with good towards the hereafter. Beware of procrastination because death comes suddenly. None of you should be deluded by the forbearance of Allâh ﷻ because the Hell-fire is closer to you than your sandal straps.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then recited these verses:

فَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ، وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

“Whoever does an atom’s weight of good shall see it. Whoever does an atom’s weight of evil shall see it.” (Sûrah az-Zilzâl, 99: 7-8)

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who repents from a sin is like one who has no sin.” Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrated this Hadîth from a different chain with the following addition: “The person who seeks forgiveness from a sin while continuing to commit it is like one who is mocking his Sustainer.”

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Remorse is repentance.” In other words, the major pillar of repentance is to show remorse, just as the major pillar of the pilgrimage is the stay at ‘Arafah.” It is essential that remorse be with regard to the fact that a person committed an act of disobedience, that he committed a repugnant act, and that he fears its consequences when he goes against it. For example, shedding blood or destroying wealth in disobedience, or other similar acts.

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When Allâh ﷻ sees remorse in a servant over a sin which he committed, He most certainly forgives him even before he seeks His forgiveness.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, if you do not sin and consequently seek forgiveness, Allâh ﷻ will take you away and bring another nation who sins and seeks forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ and He will then forgive it.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no one who likes praise more than Allâh ﷻ. It is for this reason that He praised Himself. There is no one who has more self-honour than Allâh ﷻ. It is for this reason that He prohibited immoral acts. There is no one who likes to excuse more than Allâh ﷻ. It is for this reason that He revealed Books and sent Messengers.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that a woman from the Juhaynah tribe came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ after she had fallen pregnant from committing adultery. She said to him: “O Messenger of Allâh! I have committed an act that deserves the *hadd* (the Islamic penal code), so mete it out against me.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ summoned her guardian and said to him: “Treat her well, and when she gives birth, bring her to me.” The guardian did this and eventually brought her to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He ordered that her clothes be fastened to her. He then ordered that she be stoned [till she dies]. He then offered the prayer [*janâzah salâh*] over her. ‘Umar ؓ said: “O Messenger of Allâh! You are offering prayer over her when she has committed adultery?!” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “She repented in such a way that if her repentance were to be distributed among 70 people of Madînah it would suffice them. Have you found anything superior to the fact that she came and offered herself solely for the sake of Allâh ﷻ?”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate from Ibn ‘Umar ؓ who said: “I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ narrating a Hadîth not once, twice or seven times, but more than that. I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘Al-Kifl who was from the Banî Isrâ’îl did not abstain from any sin. Once, a woman came to him

and he gave her 60 dînârs on condition that he could have intercourse with her. When he was about to commit the act, she began trembling and crying. He asked her: ‘Why are you crying? Have I compelled you?’ She replied: ‘No. Rather it is because this is an act which I never did before. The only reason that I am doing it is because I am in need [of monetary assistance].’ He said: ‘You are doing this for this reason, and you have never done it before?!! You may go and keep the money. By Allâh, I will never disobey Allâh ﷻ after this.’ He passed away that very night. The next morning, the following was written on the top of his door: ‘Allâh ﷻ has certainly forgiven al-Kifl.’”

Ibn Masûd ؓ narrates: “There were two villages: the residents of one were righteous while the residents of the other were sinners. A man from the village that had sinners left it with the intention of going to the village of righteous people. On the way, death came to him. The angels and Satan disputed with regard to him. Satan said: ‘By Allâh, he never ever disobeyed me.’ The angels said: ‘He left [that sinful village] with the intention of repentance.’ Allâh ﷻ resolved their dispute by saying: ‘Look and see to which of the two villages he is closer.’ They found that he was closer to the village of righteous people by a hand-span. He was therefore forgiven.” Ma‘mar *rahimahullâh* said: “I heard someone saying that Allâh ﷻ brought the village of righteous people closer to him [so that he will be forgiven].”

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There was a man from one of the nations before you who had killed 99 people. He inquired about the most learned person. Someone informed him of a monk. So he went to him and said that he killed 99 people and whether there was any way of repentance for him. The monk replied: ‘No.’ So he killed the monk as well and thereby killed 100 people. He again inquired about the most learned person. Someone informed him of an ‘âlim (a learned scholar). He went to him and said that he killed 100 people and whether there was any way of repentance for him. The scholar replied: ‘Yes. There is no one who can come between you and repentance. Go to such and such place for there are people there who are engaged in the worship of Allâh ﷻ. Join them in worshipping Allâh ﷻ and do not return to your hometown for it is an evil place.’ So he departed.

When he reached half way, death came to him. The angels of mercy and the angels of punishment disputed with regard to him. The angels of mercy said: 'He came repenting, turning to Allâh ﷻ with all his heart.' The angels of punishment said: 'But he never ever did any good.' An angel in the form of a human came to them. They appointed him as an arbiter between them. He said: 'Measure the distance between the two places. To whichever of the two he is closer, he will be considered to be from them.' They measured and found him to be closer to the village to which he was heading. The angels of mercy thus took his soul away."

Another narration states: "He was closer to the righteous village by one hand-span. He was thus included among its people."

Another narration states: "Allâh ﷻ ordered the evil village saying: 'You go further away.' And to the righteous village saying: 'You come closer.' Then he said: 'Measure the distance between the two. They found him closer to the righteous village by one hand-span. He was thus forgiven."

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "A man committed excesses against his own self. He met a man and said: 'A person killed 99 people. He killed all of them unjustly. Do you see any repentance for me?' He replied: 'No.' So he killed him as well. He then went to another man and said: 'A person killed 100 people. He killed all of them unjustly. Do you see any repentance for me?' He replied: 'If I were to tell you that Allâh ﷻ does not relent to the one who repents, I will be lying to you. There are some people who are engaged in the worship of Allâh ﷻ. Go to them and join them in the worship of Allâh ﷻ.' So he headed towards them but passed away while he was still going. The angels of mercy and the angels of punishment disputed with each other. Allâh ﷻ sent an angel to them who said: 'Measure the distance between the two places. Whichever of them he is closer to, he will be considered to be from among them. They found him to be closer to the repenters equal to the length of a finger nail. So he was forgiven."

Another narration states: "He went to another man and said: 'I killed 100 people. Do you see any repentance for me.' The man replied: 'You have

exceeded the bounds. I do not know. However, there are two villages. One is called Nusrah and the other is called Kufrah. The residents of Nusrah engage themselves in the deeds of the inhabitants of Paradise. No one else can live there. As for the residents of Kufrah, they are engaged in the deeds of the inmates of the Hell-fire. No one else can live there. Go to Nusrah. If you remain there and do the deeds that they do, then there is no doubt in your repentance.’ So he departed, heading towards it. When he was about half way between these two villages, death overtook him. The angels asked their Sustainer about him. Allâh ﷻ said: ‘Look at which of the two villages he is closer. Then record him among the residents of the one to which he is closer. They found him to be closer to Nusrah equal to the length of a finger-nail. He was thus recorded among its residents.’”

ON THE PROHIBITION OF OPPRESSION

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ

“The oppressors shall soon learn by what kind of turning they will turn.”
(Sûrah ash-Shu‘arâ’, 26: 227)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Oppression will result in pits of darkness on the day of resurrection.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who oppresses even one span on earth, Allâh ﷻ will necklace him with seven earths on the day of resurrection.”

It is mentioned in some books that Allâh ﷻ says: “My wrath intensifies against he who oppresses the person who finds no helper apart from Me.”

A poet says:

لا تظلمن إذا ما كنت مقتدرا - فالظلم يرجع عقباه إلى الندم
تنام عيناك والمظلوم منتبه - يدعوك عليك وعين الله لم تنم

“Do not oppress when you have the authority. For the consequences of oppression is remorse. Your eyes may be asleep while the oppressed person is awake, cursing you. And the eye of Allâh ﷻ does not sleep.”

إذا ما الظلوم استوطأ الأرض مركبا - ولج غلوا في قبيح اكتسابه
فكله إلى صرف الزمان فإنه - سيدي له ما لم يكن في حسابه

“When an oppressor walks proudly on earth and persists excessively in his abhorrent actions, then leave him to the passage of time. All that he did not consider will soon be exposed to him.” [In other words, he will soon learn the consequences of his oppressive actions].

A scholar of the past said: “Do not oppress the weak or else you will be from among the worst of the strong ones.”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه said: “The bustard dies in terror in its nest because of the oppression of an oppressor.”

It is said that it is written in the Taurâh: “A announcer will call out from behind the bridge (the *sirât*): ‘O assembly of tyrant oppressors! O assembly of wretched ones living in opulence! Allâh ﷻ will keep behind, by His might, from the oppression of any oppressor to cross this bridge today.’”

Jâbir رضي الله عنه narrates: “When I returned from my emigration to Abyssinia to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, he said: ‘Will you not inform me of the most astonishing thing which you witnessed while in Abyssinia?’ So Qutaybah who was among them said: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! While we were sitting one day, one of their old women passed by us with a container of water on her head. She passed by a youth from among them. The youth placed one of his hands between her shoulders and pushed her. The woman fell on her knees and her container of water broke. When she stood up, she turned towards him and said: ‘O you wretched one! You will soon come to know when Allâh ﷻ places the *Kursî* [the throne on which Allâh ﷻ will sit in order to pass judgement], gathers all the past and future generations, and when the hands and legs will speak of all that man did. You will come to know of the matter between me and you before Him tomorrow.’ So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘How can Allâh ﷻ ever give glory to a people when the strong are not taken to task on behalf of the weak?!’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are five people with whom Allâh ﷻ is angry. If He wills, He may give vent to His anger on them in this world or He may fling them into the Hell-fire in the hereafter. [They are]: (1)The leader of a people who takes his dues from his subjects but neither


deals with them with justice nor repulses oppression from them. (2) The leader of a people: they obey him but he does not treat the strong and weak equally. And he speaks whatever he desires. (3) A man who does not order his wife and children to obey Allâh ﷻ and does not teach them the matters of their *Dîn* [Islam]. (4) A person who employs a person, makes him do work, but does not give him his wage in full. (5) A man who wrongs a woman in her dowry.”



‘Abdullâh ibn Salâm ﷺ said: “When Allâh ﷻ created the entire creation and they all stood on their feet, they raised their heads towards Allâh ﷻ and said: ‘O Sustainer! With whom are You?’ Allâh ﷻ replied: ‘I am with the oppressed till his due is given to him.’”


Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullâh* said: “A tyrant built a castle and plastered it. An old, poor woman came and built a structure next to it where she could get some shelter. One day the tyrant mounted his steed and went around the castle. He saw the woman’s shelter and asked: ‘To who does this belong?’ He was answered thus: ‘It belongs to a poor woman takes shelter in it.’ He ordered that it be demolished. It was demolished. The old woman came and saw it demolished. She asked: ‘Who demolished it?’ A reply was given to her: ‘The king saw it and demolished it.’ The old woman raised her head towards the sky and said: ‘O my Sustainer! I was not present when this happened. But where were You?’ Allâh ﷻ then ordered Jibra’îl عليه السلام to overturn the entire castle on whoever was in it.’ Jibra’îl عليه السلام then overturned it.”

It is said that when one of the Barâmikah [a family that ruled in certain parts of the Islamic world] and his son were imprisoned, his son said to him: “O father! We have been imprisoned and confined after all the power which we enjoyed.” The father said: “O my son! It is due to the supplication of an oppressed person. The supplication reached Allâh ﷻ when we were unmindful of it but Allâh ﷻ was not unmindful of it.”

Yazîd ibn Hakîm used to say: “I never feared anyone as I feared a man whom I had wronged whom I knew has no helper except for Allâh. He said to me: ‘Allâh is sufficient for me. Allâh will decide between me and you.’”

Abû Umâmah  narrates: “The oppressor will come on the day of resurrection, and when he is on the bridge of Hell, the oppressed will meet him and remind him of the oppression that he committed against him. All those who were oppressed will continue reminding all those who oppressed them till they take away all the good deeds that they have. If they find no good deeds with them, they [the oppressors] will be made to bear their [the oppressed] evil deeds equal to the oppression which they committed against them. This will continue till they reach the lowest level of the Hell-fire.”

‘Abdullâh ibn Anîs  narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh  saying: “The people will be raised bare-headed, naked, un-circumcised, and without any defect. An announcer will call out in a voice which will be heard equally well by those who are near and those who are far: ‘I am the King, the Sovereign. None from the inhabitants of Paradise may enter Paradise while a person from the inmates of Hell has a case of wrong against him, even if it is a slap or anything more than it. None from the inmates of Hell may enter Hell while there is a case of wrong against him, even if it is a slap or anything more than it. Your Sustainer does not wrong anyone.’ We said: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! How is it that we will come bare-headed, naked, un-circumcised and without any defect?’ He replied: ‘With good deeds and evil deeds, as a complete recompense. Your Sustainer will not wrong anyone.’”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who strikes with a whip unjustly will be made to pay back on the day of resurrection.”

It is related that Khusroes hired a person to teach his son manners and train him. When the son reached the limit in virtue and manners, the tutor summoned him and struck him severely without any reason or crime. The son harboured feelings of hatred towards the tutor till when he grew up and his father passed away. The son then took over the reins of the kingdom after his father. The son then summoned the tutor and asked him: “What made you strike me so severely without any reason or crime [on my part]?” The tutor said to him: “O king! When you reached the limit in virtue and manners, I knew that you will take over the kingdom after your father. I wanted you to taste the pain of striking and oppression so that you may not oppress anyone thereafter.” The son said to him: “May Allâh reward you

well.” He then ordered that a prize be given to the tutor and handed it over to him.

ON THE PROHIBITION OF WRONGING THE ORPHAN

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا
وَيَصْطَلُونَ سَعِيرًا

“Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully are only filling their bellies with fire. And very soon they shall enter the fire.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 10)

Qatâdah *rahimahullâh* said: “This verse was revealed with regard to a man from the Ghatfân. He was the guardian over the wealth of his nephew while the latter was a young orphan child. So he ate thereof.”

The word “wrongfully” means that it should not be devoured in order to do wrong to the orphan or you should not devour it while doing wrong to them. Eating thereof with a just cause is therefore excluded from the above ruling. For example, the guardian eating thereof while fulfilling the conditions that are laid down in the books of jurisprudence.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ ۖ وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

“The one who has no need should abstain from the wealth of the orphan. And the one who is in need should consume according to the norm.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 6)

In other words, eat only that amount which is absolutely necessary, or take it as a loan, or as a wage for his work, or if he is in dire need. But once he experiences ease, he must pay it back. But if the dire need continues, it is lawful for him to eat thereof.

Allâh ﷻ emphasises the right of the orphans and the additional attention that has to be paid to them in the following verse:

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ ضِعَاعًا خَائِفًا عَلَيْهِمْ
فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا كَوْلًا سَدِيدًا.

“Let them fear who, if they left behind weak offspring, would be anxious on their account (i.e. our weak offspring will also meet the same fate). They should therefore fear Allâh and speak honourable words.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 9)

The context of this verse is against those who are of the opinion that it is with regard to making a bequest for more than one third of one’s estate. The actual meaning of this verse is that the person who has an orphan under his care should display affection to him even when addressing him, to the extent that he should address him just as he addresses his own children, e.g. by saying: “O my son!”

Furthermore, he must treat the orphan with affection, goodness and kindness, and guard his wealth just as he would like his own wealth to be guarded and just as he would like his own children to be treated after his demise. This is because recompence is reciprocal to the deed. Allâh ﷻ is the “Master of the day of recompence.” In other words, you will be recompensed as you recompense others. In other words, you will be treated as you treat others.

While a person is feeling secure, handling the wealth of others and seeing to the children of others, death comes upon him suddenly. Allâh ﷻ will then recompense him as regards his wealth, his offspring, his family, and all his other relations, just as he dealt with others. If he dealt with them in a good way, he will be rewarded well. If he dealt with them in an evil way, he will be punished accordingly. An intelligent person should therefore fear his Sustainer, and deal with the orphans who are under his care in a manner that he would like his children be treated by their guardian if they were to be orphaned.

It is related that Allâh ﷻ addressed Dâ'ûd عليه السلام saying: "O Dâ'ûd! Be like a merciful father to the orphan. Be to the widow like an affectionate husband. And you should know that as you sow, so shall you reap." In other words, as you do, the same will be done to you. There will definitely come a time when you will die and you will leave behind orphaned children and a widowed wife.

There are numerous Ahâdîth containing warnings with regard to the wealth of orphans and acting wrongfully therein. These Ahâdîth are in conformity with the verse which severely warns and cautions the people against this disastrous and fatal evil.

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "O Abû Dharr! I see you weak, and I love for you what I love for myself. You should not rule over [even] two people and you should not become the custodian of the wealth of an orphan."

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Abstain from the seven destructive deeds." The Companions asked: "O Messenger of Allâh! What are they?" He replied: "Ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ, magic, killing a soul which Allâh ﷻ sanctified unless it be for a just cause, devouring usury, devouring the wealth of the orphan..."

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The destructive deeds are seven: ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ, killing a soul without a just cause, devouring usury, devouring the wealth of the orphan..."

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Allâh ﷻ has made it incumbent upon Himself that he will not admit the following persons into Paradise and He will not permit them to taste its bounties: the habitual alcoholic, the one who devours usury, the one who devours the wealth of the orphan without a just cause, and the person who disobeys his parents."

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrates that from among the letters which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent with ‘Amr ibn Hazm ؓ to the people of Yemen was the following: “The severest of the major sins in the sight of Allâh ﷻ on the day of resurrection is ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ, killing a believing soul without a just cause, fleeing from the battlefield while in the cause of Allâh ﷻ, disobeying parents, accusing a chaste woman, learning magic, devouring usury, and devouring the wealth of the orphan.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection some people will be raised from their graves while fire will be emanating from their mouths.” He was asked: “Who are they, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “Did Allâh ﷻ not say:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَى ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا.

“Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully are only filling their bellies with fire.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 10)

In the Hadîth of the Mi‘râj as narrated by Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh*, the following is mentioned: “I saw some people over whom some men were appointed. The latter were tearing open their mouths while others were coming with rocks of fire and flinging them into their mouths, and these rocks were then exiting from their posteriors. I asked: ‘O Jibra’îl! Who are these people?’ He replied: ‘Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully are only filling their bellies with fire.’”

Al-Qurtubî *rahimahullâh* narrates in his *Tafsîr* that Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ said that the Prophet ﷺ said: “On the night of my ascension, I saw some people who had snouts like camels. There were some people who were appointed over them. They were holding them by their snouts and flinging rocks of fire into their mouths, and these rocks were exiting from their posteriors.” I asked: ‘O Jibra’îl! Who are these people?’ He replied: ‘They are the ones who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully.’”

ON THE DISAPPROVAL OF PRIDE

Because of its misfortune and evil consequences, we relate a little more on what we already related with regard to pride. It was the first act of disobedience committed by Satan. Allâh ﷻ cursed him and repulsed him from Paradise, whose width is the heavens and the earth, and cast him towards the punishment of the fire.

A Hadîth *qudsî* states: “Pride is My upper garment and greatness is My lower garment. Whoever tries to compete with Me in any of these two, I shall break him, and I will not bother.”

It is related that the proud people will be resurrected like tiny specks in the form of humans. Disgrace will cover them from all sides and they will be made to drink of the sap of the inmates of Hell.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are three people with whom Allâh ﷻ will not speak on the day of resurrection, He will not look at them and for them is a painful punishment: an old man who commits adultery, a tyrant king, and a poor person who is proud.”

‘Umar رضي الله عنه recited this verse:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ

“When he is told: ‘Fear Allâh’, arrogance prompts him to sin.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 206)

He then said: “To Allâh we belong and to him is our return. A man stood up commanding good. So he was killed. Another man stood up and said: ‘Are you killing those who command good?’ So in his pride, the proud one killed the person who opposed him and the one who commanded him.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه said: “It is sufficient as a sin that when it is said to a person: ‘Fear Allâh’, he replies: ‘Mind your own business.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to a man: “Eat with your right hand.” He replied: “I cannot.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “You will never be able to.” Nothing but pride stopped him from eating with his right hand. He was never able to raise his hand thereafter. In other words, his hand became paralysed.

It is related that Thâbit ibn Qays ibn Shammâs said: “O Messenger of Allâh! I am a person who likes beauty, as you can see [from my dress and appearance]. Is this considered to be pride?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: “No. However, pride refers to disregarding the truth and looking down on people, while they are servants of Allâh just like him or better than him.”

Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullâh* said: “When Mûsâ عليه السلام said to Pharaoh: ‘Believe and you will retain your kingdom,’ he replied: ‘Let me consult Hâmân first.’ He consulted Hâmân. Hâmân said to him: ‘At present you are a lord who is worshipped. If you bring faith, you will become a servant who worships.’ He therefore abstained from worshipping Allâh ﷻ and from following Mûsâ عليه السلام. Allâh ﷻ thus drowned him.”

Allâh ﷻ quotes the following question of the Quraysh:

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ

“They say: ‘Why did this Qur’ân not come down to some great man from the two towns?’” (Sûrah az-Zukhruf, 43: 31)

Qatâdah *rahimahullâh* said: “The great man from the two towns refers to al-Walîd ibn al-Mughîrah and Abû Mas‘ûd ath-Thaqafî. The Quraysh asked for a person who has greater authority than the Prophet ﷺ. They said with regard to the Prophet ﷺ: ‘He is a young orphan. How did Allâh ﷻ send him to us?’”

Allâh ﷻ replied to this question of theirs:

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ

“Do they distribute the mercy of your Sustainer?” (Sûrah az-Zukhruf, 43: 32)

Allâh ﷻ then informs us of their astonishment when they enter the Hell-fire and do not see those whom they looked down upon, like the people of as-Suffah. [100] “They will say: “What has happened that we do not see those men whom we considered to be among the evil ones?”” (Sûrah Sâd, 38: 62) It is said that they are referring to ‘Ammâr ﷺ, Bilâl ﷺ, Suhayb ﷺ and al-Miqdâd ﷺ.

Wahb *rahimahullâh* said: “Knowledge is like rain that comes sweet and pure from the skies. The trees drink it with their roots and change it according to their tastes. The bitter trees make the water bitter while the sweet trees make it sweeter. Similar is the case with knowledge. People safeguard it according to their ambitions and desires. The proud person becomes more proud while the humble person becomes more humble. This is because if a person is proud and ignorant at the same time, then when he acquires knowledge, he finds that with which he can be proud of. His pride thus increases. But if a person is fearful, while being ignorant at the same time, and then he acquires knowledge, he realizes that the evidence has been confirmed against him. His fear, awe and humility therefore increase.”

It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said, as narrated by Ibn ‘Abbâs ﷺ: “There will be some people who recite the Qur’ân. Their recitation does not go beyond their throats. They say: ‘We recited the Qur’ân. Who can recite better than us? And who is more learned than us?’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then turned to his Companions y and said: “They are from you, O my followers! [In other words, they are Muslims]. They are the fuel of the Hell-fire.”

It is related that a certain person was spoken very highly of to the Prophet ﷺ. One day, that man happened to come by. The Companions y said: “O

Messenger of Allâh! This is the person whom we had spoken to you about.” He ﷺ said: “I see a dark spot of Satan on him.” The man greeted and stood over the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said to him: “I ask you in the name of Allâh, did you not just think to yourself that there is no one better than you?” He replied: “By Allâh, I did think so.”

Through the light of prophet-hood, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw that what was in his heart was exposed as a dark spot on his face.

Al-Harth ibn Juz’ az-Zabîdî ﷺ, a Companion of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “From the reciters of the Qur’ân, I like those who are smiling. As for the one whom you meet with a smiling face while he returns your look with a scowl, he is the one who vexing his pride over you on account of his knowledge. May Allâh ﷻ not allow many people like him to be among the Muslims.”

Abû Dharr ﷺ relates: “I insulted a person in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ by saying to him: “O you son of a black woman!” The Prophet ﷺ said: “All of you are alike. All of you are alike. The son of a white woman has no superiority over the son of a black woman.” Abû Dharr ﷺ said: “I lied down on the ground and said to the person: ‘You may stand up and trample my cheek.’”

‘Alî ﷺ said: “He who wants to see a person from the inmates of the Hell-fire should look at a person who is sitting while there are people standing around him.”

Anas ﷺ said: “There was no person who was more beloved to his Companions than the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Yet, when they saw him, they did not stand up for him because they knew that he disliked it.”

At times the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would walk with his Companions and ask them to walk in front while he would walk behind them, either to teach others or to repulse from himself the whisperings of Satan as regards pride and arrogance.

ON THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY AND CONTENTMENT

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ most certainly increases the honour of a person when he pardons. And no person humbles himself for the sake of Allâh ﷻ without Allâh ﷻ elevating him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to the person who humbles himself despite not being poor, who spends wealth which he saved in avenues that do not entail disobedience, who shows mercy to the downtrodden and poor, and remains in the company of people of understanding and wisdom.”

It is related that the Prophet ﷺ was with a group of his Companions in his house, eating. A beggar came to the door. He suffered from a chronic illness for which he was detested. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ permitted him to come in and seated him on his thigh. He then asked him to eat. A man from the Quraysh felt disgusted by this beggar and loathed him. Consequently, he did not die without being afflicted by a similar illness.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “My Sustainer gave me one of two choices: that I be a servant and Messenger, or a king and Prophet. I did not know which of the two to choose. My close friend from the angels was Jibra’îl عليه السلام. I raised my head towards him. He said: ‘Humble yourself before your Sustainer.’ So I said: ‘I will be a servant and Messenger.’”

Allâh ﷻ addressed Mûsâ عليه السلام saying: “I accept the salâh of the person who humbles before My greatness, who does not consider himself above My creation, and imposes My fear onto his heart.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Kindness, piety, nobility, humility and conviction: all these are affluence.”

‘Îsâ ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to those who are humble in this world. They will be the people of pulpits on the day of resurrection. Glad tidings to those who reconcile between people in this world. They will inherit al-Firdaus (the highest level of Paradise) on the day of resurrection. Glad tidings to those whose hearts are pure in this world. They are the ones towards whom Allâh ﷻ will look on the day of resurrection.”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “If Allâh ﷻ guided a person with Islam, beautified his appearance, placed him in a place that is not dishonourable to him, and at the same time bestowed him with humility, then he is from the choice servants of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are four qualities which Allâh ﷻ gives to none except those whom He loves: (1) silence – and this is the first form of worship, (2) placing trust in Allâh ﷻ (*tawakkul*), (3) humility, (4) abstinence in the world.”

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was eating when a black man with smallpox which was peeling off came. Wherever he sat, the person next to him got up and went away [i.e. no one wanted to sit next to this man]. The Prophet ﷺ seated him next to him. The Prophet ﷺ said: “I like a person carrying something in his hand which is disgraceful to his family, and by which he repulses pride from himself.”

One day the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to his Companions: “Why is it that I do not see the sweetness of worship on you?” They asked: “What is the sweetness of worship?” He replied: “Humility.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When you see the humble ones from my *ummah*, you must act with humility before them. When you see the proud [and haughty] ones, you must also act proudly before them for this will humiliate and lower them.”

A poet said:

تواضع تكن كالنجم لاح لناظر - على صفحات الماء وهو رفيع
ولا تك كالدخان يعلو بنفسه - على طبقات الجو وهو وضع

“Remain humble and you will be like a star that appears glittering to the person looking at the surface of the water while it is so elevated. Do not be like smoke which rises proudly in the horizon while it is so unimportant.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The honour of a Muslim lies in his independence of people.” It is in contentment that a person experiences freedom and honour. It is therefore said: “Remain independent of whomever you like, and you will be equal to him. Be dependent on whomever you like, and you will be his slave. Do good to whomever you will, and you will be his ruler. A little that suffices you is better than a lot that causes you to transgress.”

A person said: “I did not see any wealth superior to contentment, nor any poverty severer than constant desire.” He then said the following poem:

أفادتني القناعة ثوب عز - وأي غنى أعز من القناعة
فصيرها لنفسك رأس مال - وصير بعدها التقوى بضاعة
تجد ربحين تغني عن خليل - وتنعم في الجنان بصبر ساعه

“Contentment bestowed upon me the garment of honour. What affluence can be greater than contentment? Make it your capital wealth, and thereafter make piety your goods [for trade]. You will make a double profit: you will be in no need of a friend, and you will enjoy yourself in the gardens [of Paradise forever] by remaining patient for a short while [in this world].”

Another poet said:

قنع النفس بالكفاف وإلا - طلبت منك فوق ما يكفيها
إنما أنت طول عمرك ما عمرت في الساعة التي أنت فيها

“Make your soul to be content with that which is sufficient or else it will demand from you that which is more than what is sufficient for it. Throughout your life, you are merely what you preserved in this present moment.”

Another poet said:

إذا الرزق عنك نأى فاصطبر – ومنه اقتنع بالذي قد حصل
ولا تتعب النفس في تحصيله – فإن كان ثم نصيبك وصل

“When sustenance distances itself from you, exercise patience and be content with what you have acquired of it. Do not tire the soul in acquiring it. If it was in your share [if it was destined for you], it will reach you.”

Another poet said:

إذا أعطشتك أكف اللثام – كفتك القناعة شبعاً ورثاً
فكن رجلاً رجله في الثرى – وهامة همته في الثريا

“If the hands of the miserly ones have made you thirsty, contentment will suffice in satiating your hunger and quenching your thirst. You should be a man whose feet are on the ground while the head of his determination is high in the stars.”

Another poet said:

يا طالب الرزق الهني بقوة – هيهات أنت بباطل مشغوف
رعت الأسود بقوة جيف الفلا – ورعى الذباب الشهد وهو ضعيف

“O you who are searching for sustenance by strength. Get away! You are enamoured by something that is baseless. By virtue of its strength, the snake feeds on the corpse of the desert. And the bee acquires honey despite being so weak.”

It was the practice of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that when he experienced destitution, he would order his family to offer salâh. He used to say: “This is what I have been commanded to do.” He would then recite this verse:

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

“Command your house people to establish salâh and you yourself remain steadfast on it.” (Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 132)

Someone said:

دع التهافت في الدنيا وزينتها – ولا يغرنك الإكثار والجشع
واقنع بما قسم الرحمن وارض به – إن القناعة مال ليس يقطع
وخل ويك فضول العيش أجمعها – فليس فيها إذا حققت منتفع

“Give up running headlong towards the world and its attractions. Do not let hoarding and greed deceive you. Be content with what the Merciful [Allâh ﷻ] gave you and be pleased with it. Contentment is a wealth that never comes to an end. Abandon all the superfluous possessions of life because when they will be brought before you [in the hereafter], there will be no benefit for you in them.”

A wise man said: “Honour is not in having a beautiful attire. Delighting in clothes and beautifying oneself with beautiful garments preoccupy a person to such an extent that he does not bother about anything with regard to his religion, while inclining totally towards the world. Rarely is such a person devoid of pride.”

A poet said:

رضيت من الدنيا بلقمة بائس – وليس عباء لا أريد سواها
لأنني رأيت الدهر ليس بدائم – فدهري وعمري فانيان كلاهما

“I am pleased with this world by eating a mere morsel and wearing a cloak. I do not want anything else. This is because I saw that time is not eternal.

My time and my life are both going to come to an end.”

ON THE DECEPTION OF THIS WORLD

All the conditions of the world are either those that harm or those that please. These conditions are not conducive to all the inhabitants of the world. They are coloured by what the wisdom of the Wise [Allâh ﷻ] demands. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ

“And they remain in constant conflict except he upon whom your Sustainer was merciful.” (Sûrah Hûd, 11: 118-119)

Some of the commentators say that the word **مُخْتَلِفِينَ** (in constant conflict) refers to differences in sustenance. Referring to their differences in affluence and poverty. It is therefore incumbent on the person to whom this world is favourable and for whom his Master subjugated, to receive it by showing gratitude to Him and to turn to Him by doing good deeds. Because these good deeds will be a shield against evil experiences. The person should not be deceived by his world. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَلَا تُغْرِكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغْرِكُمُ بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ

“Let not, then, the life of this world deceive you. And let not the deceitful one deceive you in the name of Allâh.” (Sûrah Luqmân, 31: 33)

وَلَكِنَّكُمْ تَتَمَنَّوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُورِثُكُمْ وَارَثَتُكُمْ وَأَغْرَتُكُمْ الْأَمَانِيُّ

“However, you tempted yourselves, you continued watching, you doubted, and your wishful thinking deluded you.” (Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 14)

The above verses are meant to create an aversion to being deceived by the world.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “How wonderful the sleep of the intelligent and their eating is! How they are envied by the wakefulness and the toiling of the foolish ones. An atom’s weight from a person of piety and conviction is superior to the entire world from those who are deceived [by the world].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “An intelligent person is he who subjugates his soul and does deeds for the time after death. A foolish person is he who allows his soul to follow its desires and yet has hopes from Allâh ﷻ.”

A poet said:

ومن يحمد الدنيا لشيء يسره – فسوف لعمرى عن قليل يلومها
إذا أدبرت كانت على المرء حسرة – وإن أقبلت كانت كثيرا همومها

“He who praises the world for something that pleases him, then I take an oath that he will soon curse it. When the world turns away from a person, it results in remorse. And when it comes to him, its worries are many.”

Another poet said:

تالله لو كانت الدنيا بأجمعها – تبقى علينا ويأتي رزقها رغدا
ما كان في حق حر أن يذل لها – فكيف وهو متاع يضمحل غدا

“By Allâh, if the world with all that it has were to remain forever to us, and its sustenance were to come in abundance, it would not entitle a free person to submit himself to it. How, then, can he submit to it when he is just a commodity that is going to vanish tomorrow?!”

Ibn Bassâm *rahimahullâh* said:

أف لدنيا ولأيامها - فإنها للحزن مخلوقة
غمومها لا تنقضي ساعة - عن ملك فيها ولا سوقه
يا عجباً منها ومن شأنها - عدوة للناس معشوقه

“Away with the world and its days, for it is created for grief. Its sorrows over possessions and business do not stop for even a moment. O how astonishing! It is an enemy to people, yet it is desired.”

Another poet said:

وقائلة أرى الأيام تعطي - لثام الناس من رزق حثيث
وتمنع من له شرف وفضل - فقلت لها خذي أصل الحديث
رأت جل المكاسب من حرام - فجادت بالخبث على الخبيث

“A woman said: ‘I see the passage of time giving quick sustenance to the wretched people. Yet it deprives the one who has honour and virtue.’ So I said to her: ‘Listen to the reality of the matter. The passage of time saw that most of the earnings are from unlawful sources. It is therefore very generous in giving wicked wealth to those who are wicked.’”

Another poet said:

سل الأيام ما فعلت بكسرى - وقصر والقصور وساكنيها
أما استدعتهم للبين طراً - فلم تدع الحليم ولا السفهيها

“Ask the passage of time what it did with Khusroes, Caesar, the palaces and those who lived in them. Did it not ask each and every one of them to leave? It thus did not leave a mild-tempered person nor a foolish person.”

It is related that a Bedouin went as a guest to some people. They offered him some food. He ate and then slept in the shade of their tent. They then unpitched the tent. The heat of the sun struck him. So he woke up and departed, saying:

ألا إنما الدنيا كظل بنيتہ - ولا بد يوماً أن ظلك زائل

“Listen! The world is like a shadow which you built. There will definitely come a day when your shadow will move.”

He also said:

ألا إنما الدنيا مقيل لراكب - قضى وطراً من منزل ثم هجرا

“Listen! The world is a place of siesta for a rider. He spends a short time at a place and then departs.”

A wise man said to his companion: “The caller has made you hear and the person who asks of you has left you with no excuse. There is no one who suffers a greater loss than he who loses conviction and misses out on doing good deeds.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه said: “Knowledge is sufficient for the fear of Allâh ﷻ and being deceived about Allâh ﷻ is sufficient as ignorance.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who loves this world and is delighted by it, the fear of the hereafter vanishes from his heart.”

A person said: “A person is taken to account for his grief over what he missed of the world, and he is taken to account for his delight for what he acquired in this world.”

The righteous people of the past used to abstain more from that which was lawful to them than how you abstain from that which is unlawful to you. That which you consider to be of no harm was considered to be from among the destructive things by them.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* used to quote these lines of Mis‘ar ibn Kidâm quite often:

نُحَارِكُ يَا مَغْرُورُ نَوْمَ وَغَفْلَةَ - وَلَيْلِكَ نَوْمٌ وَالرَّدى لَكَ لَازِمٌ
يُغَرِّكُ مَا يَفْنَى وَتَفْرَحُ بِالْمُنَى - كَمَا غُرَّ بِاللذاتِ فِي النَوْمِ حَالِمٌ
وَشُغْلُكَ فِيهَا سَوْفَ تَكْرَهُ غِبَهُ - كَذَلِكَ فِي الدُّنْيَا تَعِيشُ الْبَهَائِمُ

“O you who are deceived! Your day is spent in sleeping and negligence. Your night is spent in sleeping, while destruction is bound to you. That which is temporary deceives you, yet you rejoice with hopes. Just as a dreaming person is deceived by pleasures in his sleep. You will soon dislike the consequences of being preoccupied by it. The animals live in a similar manner in this world.”

ON THE DISAPPROVAL OF THE WORLD AND BEING WARY OF IT

It is related from Abû Umâmah al-Bâhilî that Tha‘labah ibn Hâtib رضي الله عنه said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Pray to Allâh that He bestows me with wealth.” He ﷺ replied: “O Tha‘labah! A little wealth for which you are grateful is better than a lot of wealth whose rights you cannot fulfil.” He said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Pray to Allâh that He bestows me with wealth.” He ﷺ replied: “O Tha‘labah! Isn’t there a perfect example for you in me? Would you not like to be like the Prophet of Allâh? Listen! I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, if I willed that the mountains turn into gold and silver, and move with me, they would move with me.” He said: “I take an oath by that Being who sent you as a true Prophet, if you pray to Allâh that He bestows me with wealth, I will give each person his due right, and I will do this and I will do that...” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Allâh! Bless Tha‘labah with wealth.” He then purchased some sheep and they reproduced like insects. Madînah became too small for him [and his large number of sheep]. He therefore moved away from Madînah and settled down in one of its valleys. He used to offer the *zuhr* and *‘asr salâhs* with congregation and leave out the other salâhs. His flock increased even more and so he moved further away. He gave up offering all the salâhs with congregation except for the *jumu‘ah salâh*. His sheep continued increasing like insects till he even gave up the *jumu‘ah salâh* and he began to ask passers-by about the news of Madînah. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ inquired about him saying: “What happened to Tha‘labah ibn Hâtib?” He was told: “O Messenger of Allâh! He purchased some sheep and Madînah became too small for him.” He then related Tha‘labah’s entire story to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He ﷺ said: “O how unfortunate is Tha‘labah! O how unfortunate is Tha‘labah! O how unfortunate is Tha‘labah!”

Allâh ﷻ revealed the verse:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ
إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ ط

“Take zakâh from their wealth so that you may purify them and bless them thereby, and pray for them, surely your prayer is an assurance for them.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 103)

Allâh ﷻ sent down verses making zakâh obligatory. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent a man from the Juhaynah and another from the Banî Sulaym in order to go around collecting zakâh. He gave them a letter authorising them to collect the zakâh, ordered them to leave, and to collect the zakâh from the Muslims. He said to them: “Order Tha‘labah ibn Hâtib and a certain person from the Banî Sulaym and take the zakâh from them.” These two left and went to Tha‘labah. They asked him for the zakâh and read the letter of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to him. He replied: “This zakâh is nothing but jizyah [101]. This is nothing but jizyah. This is nothing but the sister of jizyah. You may go and collect from others. When you finish, return to me.” The two then proceeded towards the person from the Banî Sulaym. He heard that they were coming. He therefore set aside his best camels and reserved them to be given as zakâh. He then welcomed them. When they saw the camels which he had set aside for zakâh, they said to him: “It is not obligatory on you to give these [choice camels of yours]. We do not want to take these from you.” He replied: “You should most certainly take them. I am most pleased to give them. I specifically set them aside so that you may take them.” When they completed their rounds of collecting zakâh, they returned to Tha‘labah and asked him for the zakâh. He replied: “Let me see that letter of yours.” He read it and said: “This zakâh is the sister of jizyah. You may go and let me think about the matter.” They proceeded till they came to the Prophet ﷺ. When he saw them, he said: “O how unfortunate is Tha‘labah.” He said this before they could speak to him [about what transpired]. And he prayed for the person from the Banî Sulaym [who gave his choicest camels so willingly]. They then informed him of what Tha‘labah did and what the person from the Banî Sulaym did.

Allâh ﷻ revealed the following verses with regard to Tha‘labah:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ عَاهَدَ اللَّهَ لَئِنْ آتَانَا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُونَنَّ
 مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ
 مُّعْرِضُونَ فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا إِنِّي فُتِنَهُمْ إِلَى يَوْمٍ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِمَا
 أَخْلَقُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ.

“There are some among them who had made a promise to Allâh [saying]: ‘If He gives us out of His bounty, we will certainly give in charity and we will certainly be among the righteous.’ Then when He gave them of His bounty, they acted miserly therewith, and turned away, retreating. So He caused hypocrisy to leave its mark in their hearts until the day on which they shall meet Him because they broke the promise which they made to Allâh and because they used to tell lies.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 75-77)

While all this was transpiring, one of the relatives of Tha‘labah was present in the company of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He also heard the verses that Allâh ﷻ revealed with regard to Tha‘labah. He went to Tha‘labah and said: “May you be deprived of a mother, O Tha‘labah! Allâh ﷻ revealed such and such verses with regard to you.” Tha‘labah came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him to accept his zakâh from him. He ﷺ replied: “Allâh ﷻ prohibited me from accepting your zakâh.” On hearing this, Tha‘labah began pouring dust on his own head. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: “This is all the consequence of your actions. When I originally ordered you, you did not listen to me.” When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ refused to accept anything from him, he returned to his house. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away, he came with the zakâh and offered it to Abû Bakr ؓ [who was now the leader of the Islamic state]. Abû Bakr ؓ refused to accept it from him. He then brought it to ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ [when he became the leader of the Islamic state]. He also refused to accept it from him. He did the same during the caliphate of ‘Uthmân ؓ. He also refused to accept it from him. Tha‘labah then passed away [as a hypocrite].

It is related by Jarîr *rahimahullâh* from Layth *rahimahullâh* that a man accompanied ‘Îsâ ﷺ. He said to him: “I will remain with you and be in your company.” They proceeded together till they reached a river bank. They sat down and began eating. They had three pieces of bread. They ate two pieces and one piece was left. ‘Îsâ ﷺ stood up, went to the river and drank water from it. He then returned and did not see the last piece of bread. He asked the man: “Who took the piece of bread?” He replied: “I do not know.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ then proceeded and the man went with him. He saw a gazelle with two of its kids. He called one of the kids. It came to him, he slaughtered it, grilled some of it and ate of it. The man also ate of it. He then addressed the kid saying: “Come back to life by the permission of Allâh.” It got up and went away. On seeing this, the man said: “I ask you in the name of that Being who showed you this miracle, who took that piece of bread?” ‘Îsâ ﷺ replied: “I do not know.” They then proceeded till they came to a valley filled with water. ‘Îsâ ﷺ held the person by his hand and they began walking on the water till they reached the other side. The man asked him: “I ask you in the name of that Being who showed you this miracle, who took that piece of bread?” ‘Îsâ ﷺ replied: “I do not know.” They proceeded till they came to a barren field. They sat down and ‘Îsâ ﷺ began gathering some soil and heaping it. He then said: “Turn into gold by the permission of Allâh.” It turned into gold. He then divided the gold into three parts and said: “One third is for me, one third is for you, and one third is for the person who took the piece of bread.” The man said: “I am the one who took the piece of bread.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ said to him: “You can have all this gold.” ‘Îsâ ﷺ then left this man and went away. While the man was still there, two men came to him and saw all that gold with him. They decided to take it away from him and kill him. So he said to them: “Let us divide it among ourselves into three parts. Then send one of you to the village to purchase some food for us.” So they sent one of them. The man who was sent thought to himself: “Why should I share this gold with them? I will poison this food, kill both of them and take all the gold for my self.” He then poisoned the food. In the meantime, the other two men said to each other: “Why should we give one third to the other person? When he returns, we will kill him and divide the wealth between us.” When the man returned to them, they killed him. They then ate the [poisoned] food and they also

died. That gold remained there in the barren field with these three people dead near it. 'Îsâ ﷺ passed by them while they were in that condition. He said to his companions: "This is the world. You should therefore be wary of it."

It is related that Dhul Qarnayn went to some people who had nothing which people normally enjoy of the world. They had dug graves and in the morning they would go to the graves, sweep them and pray near them. They would tend to herbaceous plants just as animals are tended to. Their livelihoods thus confined them to the produce of the land. Dhul Qarnayn sent an order to their king saying: "Present yourself before Dhul Qarnayn." The king replied: "I have no need to meet him. If he has a need to meet me, he should come to me." Dhul Qarnayn said: "He is right." Dhul Qarnayn then went to him and said to him: "I sent you a message asking you to come and see me. But you refused. So here I am." The king said: "If I had any work with you, I would have come to you." Dhul Qarnayn said: "How is it that I see you and your people in a condition that I have not seen in any other nation?" The king asked: "What do you mean?" He replied: "You'll do not have anything of this world. Why do you'll not take gold and silver and enjoy yourselves with these metals?" The king replied: "We dislike both these things because no sooner a person is given either of the two, he begins tiring himself and his soul prompts him to acquire something better than that." Dhul Qarnayn asked: "Why have you dug graves, and then in the morning you go to sweep them and then pray next to them?" The king replied: "When the world instils hopes into us, we look at the graves and they prevent us from harbouring hopes." Dhul Qarnayn asked: "I see that you have no food except herbaceous plants from the land. Why do you not take animals which you could milk, which you could ride, and from which you could take other benefits?" The king replied: "We dislike making our stomachs into graves for the animals. We found that the harvest of the land is sufficient for us. The minimum of food is sufficient for man. And no matter what food goes down the throat, its taste does not last all the time." The king then stretched his hand behind Dhul Qarnayn and produced a skull. He asked: "O Dhul Qarnayn! Do you know who this is?" He replied: "No. Who is he?" The king said: "He was one of the kings of the past to whom Allâh ﷻ had given authority over the land. He used to act unjustly,

he used to oppress and he used to act arrogantly. When Allâh ﷻ saw that, He put an end to him with death. He thus became like a rock that is thrown. Allâh ﷻ held his deeds against him till He will recompense him in the hereafter.” The king then took another dry skull and asked: “O Dhul Qarnayn! Do you know who this is?” He replied: “No. Who is he?” The king said: “He is the king to whom Allâh ﷻ gave kingdom after the previous king. He had been observing what the previous king was doing with the people: his tyranny, oppression and arrogance. This latter king therefore humbled himself and submitted before Allâh ﷻ. He ordered justice among the subjects of his kingdom. As you can see, Allâh ﷻ also held his deeds till He will recompense him in the hereafter.” The king then placed his hand on Dhul Qarnayn’s head and said: “This skull will also become like these two skulls. So, O Dhul Qarnayn! You had better watch what deeds you are going to do.” Dhul Qarnayn said to him: “How would you like to join me? I will take you as a brother, a minister, and a partner in all that Allâh ﷻ gave me of this wealth.” The king said: “It will not be good for you and I to be at one place, nor will it be good for us to be together.” Dhul Qarnayn asked: “And why is that?” The king said: “That is because all the people are enemies to you while they are friends to me.” Dhul Qarnayn asked: “And why is that?” The king said: “They are antagonistic towards you because of the kingdom, wealth and world that you have. I do not find anyone antagonistic towards me because I have disowned all that, because of the poverty I experience, and because of the few things which I have.” Dhul Qarnayn then left, astonished by him and learning great lessons from him.

A poet said:

يا من تمتع بالدنيا وزينتها — ولا تنام عن اللذات عيناه
شغلت نفسك فيما ليس تدركه — تقول لله ماذا حين تلقاه

“O you who are enjoying the world and its attractions! Your eyes do not sleep from the pleasures [of this world]. You have occupied your self in something that you will not achieve. What will you say to Allâh when you meet Him?”

Another poet said:

عتبت على الدنيا لرفعة جاهل – وتأخير ذي فضل فقالت خذ العذرا
بنو الجهل أبنائي لهذا رفعتهم – وأهل التقى أبناء ضربي الأخرى

“I reprimanded the world for elevating the ignorant ones and holding back those of virtue. It replied: ‘Listen to my reason. The ignorant ones are my children. I have therefore elevated them. As for the people of piety, they are the children of the other wife [i.e. they are the children of the hereafter].’”

Mahmûd al-Bâhilî said:

ألا إنما الدنيا على المرء فتنة – على كل حال أقبلت أو تولت
فإن أقبلت فاستقبل الشكر دائما – ومهما تولت فاصطر وتثبت

“Listen! The world is a test to a person in every situation – whether it comes to him or turns away from him. If it comes to him, he should always receive it with gratitude. And whenever it turns away, he should exercise patience and remain steadfast.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF CHARITY

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who gives the equivalent of a date in charity from pure earnings - and Allâh ﷻ only accepts that which is pure – then Allâh ﷻ will receive it with His right hand (in other words, with His approval and blessing). Allâh ﷻ will then nurture [and increase it] just as one of you nurtures his foal. This will continue till a single morsel [given in charity] will be as huge as Mt. Uhud.”

This is affirmed in the Book of Allâh ﷻ as follows:

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَأْخُذُ الصَّدَقَاتِ

“Have they not learnt that Allâh is He who accepts repentance from His servants and takes charities.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 104)

يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُزِيلُ الصَّدَقَاتِ

“Allâh obliterates usury and amplifies charity.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 276)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Charity never decreased any wealth. Allâh ﷻ most certainly increases the honour of a person who pardons another. He who humbles himself for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ most certainly elevates him.”

A narration of at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Charity never decreased any wealth. No person extends his hand to give in charity without it being placed in the hand of Allâh ﷻ (i.e. without Allâh ﷻ accepting it and being pleased with it) before it is placed in the hand of the beggar. No person opens the door to begging while he is not in need of it without Allâh ﷻ opening the door of poverty to him. A person says: ‘This is my wealth. This is my wealth.’ Whereas the only

wealth which he has is that which he ate and digested, that which he clothed himself with and wore out, that which he gave and stored the reward thereof. Apart from this, he is going to depart and leave everything for the people.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is none among you with whom Allâh ﷻ will not speak without any interpreter between himself and Allâh ﷻ. The person will look to his right and see nothing except that which he sent forth. He will look to his left and see nothing except that which he sent forth. He will look in front of him and see nothing but the Hell-fire right in his face. So fear the Hell-fire even if it is by a piece of date.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “One of you should protect his face from the Hell-fire even it is by a piece of date.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Charity extinguishes sins just as water extinguishes fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Ka‘b ibn ‘Ujrah! Flesh and blood that have been nurtured by unlawful wealth will never enter Paradise. The Hell-fire has more right over such a person. O Ka‘b ibn ‘Ujrah! People leave every morning: there is he who leaves to free himself and does so, and there is he who leaves and destroys himself. O Ka‘b ibn ‘Ujrah! Salâh is a means of acquiring proximity [to Allâh ﷻ], fasting is a shield, and charity extinguishes sins just as ice flows off a rock.” Another narration states: “just as water extinguishes fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Charity extinguishes the wrath of Allâh ﷻ and repulses an evil death.” Another narration states: “Allâh ﷻ repulses 70 doors of an evil death through charity.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Every person will be in the shade of his charity till the reckoning of all the people is completed.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “Which charity is the most superior?” He replied: “The charity of the person who is poor. And commence by giving to your relatives first.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A single dirham surpassed 100 dirhams.” A man asked: “How is that possible, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “A man has an immense amount of wealth. He has 100 000 dirhams and gives [100 dirhams] from there. Another man has only two dirhams. He takes one dirham and gives it in charity.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not refuse the person who asks of you even if it means giving him a hoof of an animal [of a sheep or cow].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are seven persons whom Allâh ﷻ will shade on a day wherein there is no shade except the shade provided by Him.” Among these seven is: “a man who gives in charity and conceals giving it to such an extent that even his left hand does not know what his right hand gave.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Doing acts of kindness protects a person from evil occurrences. Charity given in secrecy extinguishes the wrath of Allâh ﷻ. Maintaining ties of kinship increases one’s lifespan.” A narration of at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* states: “Doing acts of kindness protects a person from evil occurrences. Charity given in secrecy extinguishes the wrath of Allâh ﷻ. Maintaining ties of kinship increases one’s lifespan. Every act of kindness is a charity. The people of sympathy in this world shall be the people of sympathy in the hereafter. The people who are unsympathetic in this world will be unsympathetic in the hereafter. The first to enter Paradise shall be the people of sympathy.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrate that a person asked: “What is [the reward for] charity, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “It is multiplied numerous times. And there is much more in store by Allâh ﷻ.” He then recited this verse:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً

“Who is that person who will lend to Allâh a good loan? Thereafter Allâh will multiply it numerous times.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 245)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “Which charity is the most superior?” He replied: “That which is given in secrecy to a poor person, or the charity that is given by a poor person.” He then recited this verse:

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ؕ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ

“If you give charity openly, what an excellent thing it is. But if you conceal it and convey it to the poor, that is better for you.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 271)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A Muslim who clothes a Muslim who has no clothes, Allâh ﷻ will clothe the former with the green garments of Paradise. A Muslim who feeds a hungry Muslim, Allâh ﷻ will feed the former from the fruits of Paradise. A Muslim who provides a drink to a thirsty Muslim, Allâh ﷻ will make him drink from the sealed nectar [of Paradise].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Charity to a poor person is considered as charity. Charity given to a relative is considered as two things: charity and maintaining ties of kinship.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “Which charity is the most superior?” He replied: “Charity given to a relative who harbours internal enmity towards you.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who loans a milk-providing animal and then takes it back, or loans dirhams [to a person who is in need], or gives directions to a traveller, shall receive the reward of freeing a slave.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Every loan is an act of charity.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the night of my ascension (i.e. the night of Mi‘râj), I saw the following written on the door of Paradise: ‘The reward for charity is multiplied by ten. The reward for a loan is multiplied by 18.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who provides ease to a person in difficulty, Allâh ﷻ shall give him ease in this world and in the hereafter.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “What type of Islam is best?” He replied: “That you provide food and you greet him whom you know and him whom you do not know.”

A person said: “I asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ thus: ‘Inform me of everything.’ He replied: ‘Everything was created from water.’ I said: ‘Inform me of something which if I do, I will enter Paradise.’ He replied: ‘Provide food, spread the *salâm* (the Islamic greeting), maintain ties of kinship, offer *salâh* while people are sleeping, and you will enter Paradise peacefully.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Worship the Merciful [Allâh ﷻ], provide food, spread the *salâm*, and you will enter Paradise peacefully.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “From among the things that compel the mercy [of Allâh ﷻ] is providing food to a poor Muslim.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who feeds his brother till he satiates his hunger and provides him with water till he quenches his thirst, Allâh ﷻ will distance him from the Hell-fire by seven trenches. The distance between each trench is equal to a journey of 500 years.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ will say on the day of resurrection: ‘O man! I fell ill but you did not visit Me.’ Man will reply: ‘How could I visit You whereas You are the Sustainer of all the worlds?’ Allâh ﷻ will say: ‘Did you not know that a certain servant of Mine had fallen ill, yet you did not visit him? Did you not know that had you visited

him, you would have found Me with him? O man! I asked you for food but you did not provide Me with food.' Man will say: 'O my Sustainer! How could I feed You whereas You are the Sustainer of all the worlds?' Allâh ﷻ will say 'Do you not remember a certain servant of Mine asking you for food but you did not feed him? Did you not know that had you fed him you would have received the reward thereof from Me? O man! I asked you for drink but you did not provide Me with a drink.' Man will say: 'O my Sustainer! How could I provide you with drink whereas You are the Sustainer of all the worlds?' Allâh ﷻ will say: 'A certain servant of Mine asked you for drink but you did not give him. Did you not know that had you given him a drink you would have received the reward thereof from Me?'"

ON FULFILLING THE NEED OF A FELLOW MUSLIM

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى

“Help each other in good deeds and in piety.” (Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 2)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who endures to help his brother and to benefit shall receive the reward of the *mujâhidîn* in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ has a special creation whom He created for the fulfilment of the needs of people. He took an oath over Himself that He will not punish them with the Hell-fire. When the day of resurrection takes place, pulpits of light will be placed for them. They will be conversing with Allâh ﷻ while the rest of the people will be engaged in their reckoning.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who endeavours to fulfil a need of his Muslim brother, and fulfils it or is unable to fulfil it, Allâh ﷻ will forgive him his past and future sins, and record for him two freedoms: freedom from the Hell-fire and freedom from hypocrisy.”

Anas ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who walks to fulfil a need of his Muslim brother, Allâh ﷻ records 70 good deeds for every step that he takes and wipes off 70 sins from his record. If the Muslim brother's need is fulfilled by him, he will come out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him. If he passes away while fulfilling that need, he will enter Paradise without reckoning.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who walks with his Muslim brother in order to fulfil a need of his, and advises

him therein, Allâh ﷻ will place seven trenches between the person and the Hell-fire. The distance between one trench and the next will be like the distance between the skies and the earth.”

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ has special bounties which He keeps with people as long as they continue seeing to the needs of people and as long as they do not get bored [or disinterested] in this regard. But once they become disinterested, He transfers these bounties to other people.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Do you know what the lion says when it roars?” The Companions replied: “Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger know best.” He said: “It says: ‘O Allâh! Do not empower me over anyone who is from among those who do acts of kindness.’”

‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ؓ said: “If any of you has any task, he should commence with it early in the morning on a Thursday. When he leaves his house, he must recite the last verse of Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, Âyatul Kursî, Sûrah al-Qadr and Sûrah al-Fâtihah. Surely in the recitation of all this is the fulfilment of the needs of this world and the hereafter.”

‘Abdullâh ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ؓ narrates: “I went to the door of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* for some need. So he said to me: ‘If you have any need for me, send a messenger to me or write a letter to me because I feel ashamed of Allâh ﷻ to see you at my door.’”

‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ؓ said: “I take an oath by that Being whose hearing encompasses all sounds, no person brings happiness to a heart without Allâh ﷻ creating a special enjoyment from that happiness. Then when any calamity befalls, the person hastens towards it as water rushes downhill in order to repulse that calamity just as an unknown camel is repulsed from one’s flock.”

‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ؓ said: “Being unable to fulfil one’s own need is easier than seeking its fulfilment by someone who is unable to do so.” [In other

words, you should rather do without something than going and begging to people who will be unable to fulfil that need for you. Exercising patience for a little while is better than humiliating yourself before others].

‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib عليه السلام said: “Do not make it a habit of constantly asking your fellow brother to fulfil your needs because when a calf sucks on the teat excessively, the cow thrusts it aside with its horns.”

A poet said:

لا تقطعن عادة الإحسان عن أحد — ما دمت تقدر والأيام تارات
واذكر فضيلة صنع الله إذ جعلت — إليك لا لك عند الناس حاجات

“Do not stop your habit of showing kindness to anyone as long as you have the ability and the days are moving ahead. Remember the favour of Allâh ﷻ that He enabled you to fulfil needs without your having the need of having them fulfilled at the hands of people.”

Another poet said:

اقض الحوائج ما استطعت وكن لهم أخيك فارح
فلخير أيام الفتى — يوم قضى فيه الحوائج

“Fulfil the needs [of people] as much as you can and be a person who removes the worry of his brother. For surely, from among the best days of a person is the day wherein he fulfils a need.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to the person at whose hands good was initiated and destruction to the person at whose hands evil was initiated.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF *WUDŪ'* (ABLUTION)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “He who performs a perfect *wudū'* and offers two rak'ats of salāh without allowing his thoughts to stray therein shall come out from his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him.” Another narration states: “And does not forget anything in his salāh, his past sins are forgiven.”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “Should I not inform you of that with which Allāh ﷻ wipes out sins and with which He raises ranks? Performing a complete *wudū'* despite difficulties, taking many steps to the musjids, and waiting for the next salāh immediately after the present salāh. That is real *ribât!*” [\[102\]](#) He said this three times.

Once the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ performed ablution and washed each part once. He then said: “This *wudū'*: Allāh ﷻ does not accept salāh without it.” On another occasion he performed ablution and washed each part two times. He then said: “He who washes each part two times, Allāh ﷻ will give him his reward two times.” On another occasion he performed ablution and washed each part three times. He then said: “This is my way of ablution, the way of ablution of the Prophets before me, and the way of ablution of the friend of Allāh, Ibrâhîm عليه السلام.”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “He who engages in the remembrance of Allāh ﷻ while performing his ablution, Allāh ﷻ purifies his entire body. He who does not engage in the remembrance of Allāh ﷻ [while performing ablution], only those parts where the water reaches are purified.”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “He who performs ablution while already being in a state of purity, Allāh ﷻ records ten good deeds for him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person performs ablution and rinses his mouth, the sins come out from his mouth. When he blows his nose, the sins come out from his nose. When he washes his face, the sins come out from his face so much so that they come out from beneath his eyelids. When he washes his hands, the sins come out from his hands so much so that they come out from beneath his fingernails. When he passes his hand over his head, the sins come out from his head so much so that they come out from his ears. When he washes his feet, the sins come out from his feet so much so that they come out from beneath his toenails. His walking to the musjid and his salâh therein are then additional [sources of reward].”

It is related that a person who is in a state of purity is like a person who is fasting.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever from among you performs a complete *wudû’* and then looks towards the sky and says the following words, the eight doors of Paradise are opened for him and he can enter from whichever one he desires.” The words are:




أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

“I testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh, who is one and has no partner. And I testify that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.”

‘Umar ؓ said: “A perfect ablution repulses Satan from you.”

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* said: “He who is able to sleep in a state of purity, engaging in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and seeking forgiveness should do so because the souls are resurrected in the state in which they are taken away.”

It is related that ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ sent an envoy to Egypt for the cover of the Ka‘bah. On his way, this envoy stopped at a place in Syria next to the monastery of a monk who was the most learned monk of the time.

The envoy of ‘Umar  wanted to meet this monk and see what type of knowledge he has. So he went to him and asked him to open his door. He did not open his door for quite some time. He then went to the monk and requested that he would like to listen to his knowledge. On hearing him talk, he was impressed by his knowledge. The envoy then complained to him for his making him wait so long at the door. The monk said: “I had already seen you when you were approaching my house with the awe of a king. I was awe-struck by you. I made you wait at the door because Allâh  had said to Mûsâ []: ‘O Mûsâ! When you fear a king, perform ablution and order your family to perform ablution as well, for surely the person who performs ablution is under My protection from whatever he fears.’ I therefore locked the door from you till I and all those who are in my house performed ablution and we prayed. We felt safe thereafter and then we opened the door for you.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF SALÂH

Since salâh is the most virtuous of acts of worship, we are repeating the encouragement to its performance, as is repeated in the grand Book of Allâh ﷻ. The virtues of salâh that are enumerated here are in addition to what was enumerated previously.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No person was given anything better than the permission to offer two rak‘ats of salâh.”

Muhammad ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh* said: “If I were given the choice between offering two rak‘ats of salâh and Paradise, I would choose the two rak‘ats over Paradise. This is because the two rak‘ats will be for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ while Paradise will be for my pleasure.”

It is said that when Allâh ﷻ created the seven heavens, He surrounded them with angels and ordered them to engage in worship through salâh. They do not tire for a single moment. He set a different type of worship for each of the inhabitants [angels] of the heavens. There are those who are standing on their feet [and will continue standing] till the blowing of the trumpet. There are those who are in prostration. There are those who lowered their wings out of awe for Him. The angels of the ‘*Illîyîn* and the ‘*Arsh*(Throne) are standing and circuiting the Throne, glorifying and praising their Sustainer, and seeking forgiveness for those who are on earth. Allâh ﷻ combined all these [different postures] in a single salâh by way of honouring the believers. This, so that they may have a share of the worship of the inhabitants of the heavens. In addition to that, He gave them the Qur’ân which they recite in the salâh. He therefore asked them to be grateful for this. The way of showing gratitude is to fulfil the salâh with its prerequisites and within its limits.

Allâh ﷻ says:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

“Those who believe in the unseen, and establish the salâh, and spend of that which We bestowed to them.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 3)

وَأَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ

“Establish the salâh.” (Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 20)

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

“Establish the salâh.” (Sûrah Hûd, 11: 114)

وَالْمُؤِمِّنِينَ الصَّلَاةَ

“Those who establish the salâh.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 162)

You will not find salâh mentioned anywhere in the Qur'ân without the order to establish it also mentioned. But when the Qur'ân talks about the hypocrites, it says:

قَوْلًا لِلْمُصَلِّينَ، الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

“Destruction to the performers of salâh who delay their salâh from the prescribed times.” (Sûrah al-Mâ'ûn, 108, 4-5)

Here Allâh ﷻ refers to them as performers of salâh while He refers to the believers as those who establish salâh. This, so that it may be known that the performers of salâh are many while those who establish salâh are few. The negligent ones do deeds as a formality and do not ponder over the day when the deeds will be presented before Allâh ﷻ, and whether they will be accepted or not.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is he among you who offers a salâh but only one third, one quarter, one fifth, or one sixth – till he said one tenth – of it is recordedl.” In other words, only that percentage of his salâh

is recorded in which he was fully conscious [that he is standing before Allâh ﷻ and praying to Him].

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who offers two rak‘ats of salâh turning to Allâh ﷻ with all his heart, comes out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him.”

The salâh of a person increases in value by his attention to Allâh ﷻ in it. If he does not turn his full attention to Allâh ﷻ in his salâh, and instead, engages in other thoughts, then he is like a person standing at the door of the king excusing himself for this mistakes and shortcomings. When he reaches the door of the king, he stands before it, and the king comes and stands before him [waiting to hear what he has to say]. Instead, this person starts looking to the right and the left. And so, the king does not fulfil the need for which this person came. The king will only turn to him in accordance with his attention that he gives to the king. Similar is the case of salâh. When a person commences salâh and is not attentive in it, then it is not accepted from him.

Salâh is like a feast prepared by a king. He prepared different types of foods and drinks. Every type of food has a different taste and every colour has a different benefit. He then invites the people to this feast. Similar is the case with salâh. Allâh ﷻ invited the people towards salâh and laid down different postures and different words of remembrance. He then asked them to worship Him through these different postures and words so that they may take delight from each type of servitude – the different postures of salâh are like the different foods, and the different words are like the different drinks.

It is said that there are 12 000 qualities in salâh. These 12 000 were then combined to form 12 qualities. He who intends to offer salâh should most certainly fulfil these 12 qualities so that his salâh may be complete. Six of them are before actually commencing the salâh and six are in the salâh itself. They are:

(1) Knowledge. The Prophet ﷺ said: “A little action with knowledge is better than a lot of action done in ignorance.”

(2) *Wudû'* (ablution). The Prophet ﷺ said: "There is no *salâh* without purity."

(3) Clothing. Allâh ﷻ says:

خُلُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ

"Take your adornment at the time of every *salâh*." (Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 32)

In other words, wear your clothes for every *salâh*.

(4) Safeguarding of the prescribed time. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْثُوتًا

"Surely *salâh* is incumbent upon the Muslims at its appointed times." (Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 103)

(5) Facing the qiblah. Allâh ﷻ says:

قُولُوا وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ط وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ

"Now turn your face towards the Sacred Masjid. And wherever you may be, turn your faces towards it." (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 144)

In other words, turn in the direction of the Ka'bah.

(6) Intention. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Deeds are gauged by intentions. Each person shall receive what he intended."

(7) *At-Takbîr* (to say *Allâhu akbar*). The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The sanctity of *salâh* commences with the *takbîr* and ends with the *salâm*."

(8) *Al-Qiyâm* (the standing posture). Allâh ﷻ says:

وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ

“Stand before Allâh with respect.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 238)

In other words, offer salâh while standing.

(9) *Al-Fâtihah*. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَاقْرَءُوا مَا يَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

“Now read as much as is easy for you of the Qur’ân.” (Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 20)

(10) *Ar-Rukû‘* (the bowing posture). Allâh ﷻ says:

وَارْكَعُوا

“and bow down in prayer.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 43)

(11) *As-Sujûd* (the prostration). Allâh ﷻ says:

وَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ

“but prostrate to Allâh...” (Sûrah Hâ Mîm Sajdah/Fussilat, 41: 37)

(12) *Al-Qu‘ûd* (the sitting posture). The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person raises his head from the last prostration and sits for the time of the *tashahhud*, the salâh is completed.”

Once these 12 conditions are met, the person needs *ikhlâs*(devotion) in order to fulfil these conditions. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ

“So worship Allâh in absolute devotion to Him.” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 2)

As for the need for knowledge, this is in three aspects: (1) The person must be able to differentiate what is compulsory (*fard*) and what is Sunnah. (2) He should also know what is compulsory (*fard*) and what is Sunnah in the ablution as well. This is because the ablution is a perfection of *salâh*. (3) He should recognize the plot of Satan and thereby endeavour to fight him.

As for the ablution, its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you purify your heart from hatred, jealousy and deception. (2) That you purify your body from sins. (3) That you wash the parts of ablution thoroughly without wasting water.

As for clothing, its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) It must be acquired through lawful means. (2) It must be pure of impurities. (3) It must be in accordance with the Sunnah. It must not be worn out of pride and for show.

As for the prescribed time, it entails three things: (1) You should be constantly looking at the sun, moon and stars by which you can calculate the arrival of the *salâh* time. (2) Your ears must be directed towards listening to the *adhân* – the call to *salâh*. (3) Your heart must be constantly pondering and thinking about the time of *salâh*.

As for facing the qiblah, its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you face the qiblah with your face. (2) That you turn to Allâh ﷻ with your heart. (3) That you be humble and submissive.

As for the intention, its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you know which *salâh* you are offering. (2) That you are conscious of the fact that you are standing before Allâh ﷻ and that He is watching you. You would therefore be standing with awe. (3) That you realize that He knows what is in your heart. You should therefore empty your heart of all worldly engagements.

As for the *takbîr* (saying *Allâhu akbar*), its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you say *Allâhu akbar* correctly and with certainty. (2) That you raise your hands in line with your ears. (3) That you have presence of heart, so that you say the *takbîr* with respect.

As for the *qiyâm* (standing posture), its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you direct your gaze towards the spot of prostration. (2) That you turn your heart towards Allâh ﷻ. (3) That you do not turn to the right and left.

As for the *qirâ'ah* (recitation), its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you recite Sûrah al-Fâtihah with correct pronunciation, at a slow pace, and without a singing tune. (2) That you recite with pondering and reflecting over its meaning. (3) That you practise on what you are reading.

As for the *rukû'* (bowing posture), its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you ensure that your back is flat, neither lowering it nor raising it. (2) That you place your hands on your knees and keep your fingers opened. (3) That you remain tranquil in your bowing position and you recite the *tasbîh* (the glorification of Allâh ﷻ) with respect and reverence.

As for the *sujûd* (prostration), its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you place your hands in line with your ears. (2) That you do not stretch out your arms [on the ground]. (3) That you remain tranquil in your prostration and you recite the *tasbîh* (the glorification of Allâh ﷻ) with respect.

As for the *qu'ûd* (sitting posture), its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That you sit on your left foot, with your right foot upright. (2) That you recite the *tashahhud* with respect, and you pray for your self and the believers. (3) That you make the *salâm* with perfection.

The perfection of the *salâm* entails it being with a true intention from your heart, that it is to all those who are to your right: angels, men, women, and in like manner to the left, and that your eyes should not look beyond your shoulders.

As for devotion, its perfection is attained in three ways: (1) That through your *salâh* you seek the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ and not the pleasure of people. (2) You consider that all inspiration to do good is from Allâh ﷻ alone. (3)

That you safeguard your salâh till you take it with you on the day of resurrection. This is because Allâh ﷻ says:





مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحُسْنَىٰ







“Whoever comes with a good deed...” (Sûrah al-Qasas, 28: 84)

Allâh ﷻ did not say: “He who does a good deed.”

ON THE TERRORS OF THE RESURRECTION

It is related that ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Will the lover remember his beloved on the day of resurrection?” He replied: “There are three times when he will not think of his beloved: (1) At the weighing of deeds till he knows whether it will be light or heavy. (2) When the scrolls of deeds are distributed: whether he will receive them in his right hand or in his left hand. (3) When a neck appears from the Hell-fire and encompasses them. It will say: ‘I have been imposed upon three people: (1) the person who called upon another deity apart from Allâh, (2) every tyrant, obstinate person, (3) and every person who does not believe in the day of reckoning.’ It will encompass them till it flings them into the depths of Hell. Hell has a bridge that is thinner than a strand of hair and sharper than a sword. It has hooks and spikes. People will pass through it as swift as a thunderbolt, as swift as a severe wind,”

Abû Hurayrah  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “When Allâh  completed the creation of the heavens and the earth, He created a trumpet which he gave to Isrâfîl . He placed it in his mouth, looking towards the Throne, waiting for the order to blow it.” I asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is the trumpet?” He replied: “It is a horn made of light.” I asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What does it look like?” He replied: “It has a huge circle. I take an oath by that Being who sent me as a Prophet with the truth, the size of its circle is like the width of the heavens and the earth. He will blow into it three times: once for the great terror, once for the thunder and once for the resurrection. The souls will all come out like bees filling the entire area between the heavens and the earth, and enter the bodies through the nostrils.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “I will be the first person for whom the earth will be split.” Another narration states: “When Allâh  resurrects Jibra’îl , Mîkâ’îl  and Isrâfîl , they will descend to the grave of the Prophet  with al-Burâq (a stead of Paradise) and garments from

Paradise. The earth will be split by him and he will look at Jibra'il عليه السلام. He will ask: 'O Jibra'il! What day is this?' He will reply: 'This is the day of resurrection. It is the day of *al-Hâqqah* (the inevitable). It is the day of *al-Qâri'ah* (the day that causes a trembling).' He will ask: 'O Allâh ﷻ do with my *ummah*?' He will reply: 'Take delight for you are the first one for whom the earth was split.'"

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Allâh ﷻ says: 'O assembly of jinn and men! I advised you. Now there are only your deeds in your scrolls. He who finds good therein should praise Allâh ﷻ. He who finds anything else should blame none but his self.'"

It is related that the following verses were recited in the assembly of Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh ar-Râzî *rahimahullâh*:

يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ وَفْدًا

"The day when We shall gather the righteous ones before the Merciful as guests." (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 86)

"as guests", in other words, on horseback.

وَنَسُوقُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَى جَهَنَّمَ وَرِثًا

"We shall drive the sinners towards Hell in a thirsty state." (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 87)

"in a thirsty state", in other words, walking and thirsty.

[When these verses were recited], he said: "O people! Hasten, hasten. Tomorrow you will be resurrected to the *mauqif* – the field on which the entire creation will be made to stand. You will come from all sides in groups upon groups. You will stand before Allâh ﷻ one by one. You will be questioned about what you did letter by letter. The *auliyâ'* (friends of Allâh ﷻ) will be ushered to the Merciful as a delegation after delegation. The sinners will be herded to the punishment of Allâh ﷻ and enter Hell

with loss upon loss. O my brothers! Before you is a day whose length is equal to 50 000 years of your calculation. It is the day of *ar-Râjifah* (the first convulsion), the day of *al-Âzifah* (the day when the hearts will come up to the throats), the day when the people will stand before the Sustainer of the worlds, it is the day of regret and remorse, it is the day of argument, it is the day of accounting, it is the day of questioning, it is the day of *as-Sayhah* (the screeching and deafening sound), it is the day of *al-Hâqqah* (the inevitable), it is the day of *al-Qâri'ah* (the day that causes a trembling), it is the day of rising, it is the day when a person will see what his hands sent forth, it is the day of *at-Taghâbun* (the day of mutual losing and winning), it is the day when faces will be blackened and faces will be illuminated, it is the day when neither wealth nor offspring will be of any avail except for he who comes to Allâh ﷻ with a sound heart, it is the day when excuses will not be of any avail to the wrongdoers, and for them shall be curses and for them shall be an evil abode.”

Muqâtil ibn Sulaymân *rahimahullâh* said: “All the creations will stand on the day of resurrection for 100 years, not talking at all. Then for another 100 years in total darkness, at a complete loss. Then for another 100 years they will crowd into each other, disputing before their Sustainer. The day of resurrection is equal to 50 000 years of your calculation. But it will pass by a devoted believer quicker than the shortest compulsory *salâh*.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A man will not be able to move until he is questioned about four things: (1) his life and how he spent it, (2) his body and how he made it old, (3) his knowledge and where he practised on it, (4) his wealth: how he earned it and where he spent it.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “There was no Prophet who did not receive an accepted supplication. Each one used it in this world. But I reserved my supplication for the intercession of my *ummah* on the day of resurrection.”

O Allâh! Make us eligible for his intercession on the basis of his high rank in Your sight. Peace and salutations of Allâh ﷻ to him, his family and his Companions.

ON THE DESCRIPTION OF HELL AND THE SCALE

There is nothing wrong in mentioning this even though some of it was mentioned before. We are doing it to complete its benefit. It is possible that the repetition of admonitions will awaken the negligent and corrupt hearts, more so, since Allâh ﷻ amplified the terror of Hell and the different scenes of the day of resurrection in various places in His Book. This has the greatest impact on the hearts of the intelligent and draws our attention to the fact that whatever is apart from that is insignificant, and that the hereafter is best and everlasting.

As for the description of Hell – may Allâh ﷻ save us from it through His favour and bounty – it is related in the Hadîth that Hell is pitch black and dark. It has no light and no flare. It has seven doors. There are 70 000 mountains at each door. Each mountain has 70 000 sections of fire. Each section has 70 000 crevices. Each crevice has 70 000 valleys. Each valley has 70 000 castles of fire. Each castle has 70 000 houses of fire. Each house has 70 000 snakes and 70 000 scorpions. Each scorpion has 70 000 tails. Each tail has 70 000 spines. Each spine has 70 000 vessels of poison. When the day of resurrection takes place, the veils will be lifted from Hell. Canopies will fly from it and go to the right side of man and jinn. Others will go to their left, in front of them, above them and behind them. When they see all this, they will fall to their knees and they will all begin calling out: “O our Sustainer! Give us peace.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hell will be brought on the day of resurrection. It will have 70 000 reins. Each rein will be held by 70 000 angels who will be drawing it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to the huge size of the guards of Hell, referred to in this verse: “stern and powerful.”[\[103\]](#) He ﷺ said: “The distance between the two shoulders of these angels is equal to a journey of one year. Each one of them has such strength that if he were to

strike a mountain with the iron rod that is in his hand, it would be reduced to powder. With each strike, he will cast 70 000 people into the pit of Hell.”

As for the following verse:

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ

“Appointed over it are 19 angels.” (Sûrah al-Muddaththir, 74: 30)

This refers to the heads of the az-Zabâniyah (a specific group of guards). As for the general angels of Hell, their number is known to none but Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ

“None knows the armies of your Sustainer but He.” (Sûrah al-Muddaththir, 74: 31)

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ was asked about the extent of Hell. He replied: “By Allâh I do not know what its size is. However, we heard that the distance between the ear and shoulder of the az-Zabâniyah is equal to a journey of 70 years. And that valleys of pus and blood flow in Hell.”

A Hadîth of Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* states that the thickness of the canopies of Hell is equal to a journey of 40 years.

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “This fire of yours [i.e. this fire of the world] is one seventieth part of the heat of Hell.” The Companions y said: “O Messenger of Allâh! The fire of this world alone would have sufficed.” He replied: “It surpasses it by 69 times. Each one equal to the other.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If an inmate of Hell were to remove his hand towards the inhabitants of the world, the entire world will burn by its heat. If one of the guards of Hell were to come before the inhabitants of the

world so that they could see him, they would all die on account of the anger of Allâh ﷻ that is on him.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was sitting with his Companions y when he heard a terrifying sound. He asked: “Do you know what this is?” We replied: “Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger know best.” He said: “It is a rock that was thrown into Hell 70 years ago. It continued falling and it reached the bottom now.”

‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ used to say: “Be constant in remembering the Hell-fire because its heat is intense, its pit is deep, and its rods are of steel.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ used to say: “The Hell-fire picks up its people as a bird picks up seeds.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ was asked about this verse:

إِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ يَبْعِدُ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغِيْطًا وَرُفِيرًا

“When it will see them from a distant place, they will hear its raging and roaring.” (Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 12)

He was asked: “Does Hell have two eyes?” He replied: “Yes. Did you not hear the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘He who wilfully fabricates a lie against me should prepare for himself a seat in front of the eyes of Hell.’ He was asked: ‘O Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ! Does it have two eyes?’ He replied: ‘Did you not hear these words of Allâh ﷻ:

إِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ يَبْعِدُ

“When it will see them from a distant place...” (Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 12)

This is further supported by the following Hadîth: “A neck will come out of the Hell-fire. It will have two eyes with which it looks and a tongue with which it speaks. It will say: ‘Today I have been appointed over he who

ascribed others deities to Allâh ﷻ.’ It will be able to look at them more clearly than a bird that is attracted to a sesame seed and thus pecks at it.”

As for a description of the scale, it is related in a Hadîth that the pan for good deeds is of light and the pan of evil deeds is of darkness.

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Paradise will be placed to the right of the Throne and Hell to its left. The pan of good deeds to its right and the pan of evil deeds to its left. Paradise will thus be on the side of good deeds and Hell will be on the side of evil deeds.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه used to say: “The good and evil deeds will be weighed on a scale which has two pans and a tongue.” He also used to say: “When Allâh ﷻ decides to weigh the deeds of man, He will turn them into solids and weigh them on the day of resurrection.”

ON THE DISAPPROVAL OF PRIDE AND CONCEIT

You should know – may Allâh ﷻ guide me and you for the good of this world and the hereafter – that pride and conceit snatch away virtues and earn vices. A vice is sufficient to be considered a vice if it prevents one from listening to advice and accepting admonition. The scholars therefore say that knowledge causes destruction between modesty and pride. Knowledge is war to a conceited person just as flood-water is war to a lofty building.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person who has an iota of pride in his heart will not enter Paradise.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ does not look at the person who drags his garment [below the ankles] out of pride.”

The wise sages said: “Kingdom cannot remain with pride.”

Allâh ﷻ equated pride with corruption. He says:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فُسَادًا

“That abode of the hereafter – We shall give it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land, nor to cause corruption.” (Sûrah al-Qasas, 28: 83)

Allâh ﷻ says:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

“I will turn away from My signs those who are unjustly proud in the earth.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 146)

A wise person said: “When I see a proud person, I most certainly vex my pride over him.”

Al-Jâhiz *rahimahullâh* said: “Those who are notorious for their pride among the Quraysh are the Banû Makhzûm and Banû Umayyah. And from the Arabs, the Banû Ja‘fah ibn Kilâb and the Banû Zurârah ibn ‘Adîyy. As for the Khusroes, they considered the people to be nothing but slaves and themselves to be nothing but lords.”

A man from the Banû ‘Abd ad-Dâr was asked: “Why don’t you go to the caliph?” He replied [out of his pride]: “I fear that the bridge will not be able to bear my nobility.”

Al-Hajjâj ibn Artâh was asked: “Why is it that you do not attend the congregation?” He replied: “I fear the farmers crowding around me.”

It is said that Wâ’il ibn Hajar came to the Prophet ﷺ so the Prophet ﷺ apportioned a piece of land to him and said to Mu‘âwiyah ؓ: “Give this land to him and record the title deed in his favour.” Mu‘âwiyah ؓ went out with him in the intense heat of the sun. He walked behind Wâ’il’s camel and the heat of the sun burnt him. So Mu‘âwiyah ؓ said to him: “Let me sit behind you on your camel.” He replied: “I do not allow subjects to sit behind me.” Mu‘âwiyah ؓ said: “Okay, lend me your sandals.” He replied: “O son of Abû Sufyân! It is not miserliness that is preventing me. However, I do not want the princes of Yemen to hear that you wore my sandals. You should rather walk in the shade of my camel and that alone would be a sufficient honour for you.” It is said that he was alive during the caliphate of Mu‘âwiyah. He went and met him. Mu‘âwiyah ؓ seated him on the couch and spoke to him.

Al-Masrûr ibn Hind said to a man: “Do you know me?” He replied: “No.” He said: “I am al-Masrûr ibn Hind.” The man said: “I do not know you.” He said: “Curse to the person who does not know the moon.”

A poet says:

قولا لأحق يلوي التيه أخدعه - لو كنت تعلم ما في التيه لم تته

التيه مفسدة للدين منقصة - للعقل مهلكة للعرض فانتبه

“Say to the foolish person who turns in pride which has deceived him: ‘Had you known [the harms] that are in pride, you would not act so proudly. Pride destroy one’s Islam, it diminishes one’s intelligence, and it destroys one’s honour. So be wary.’”

It is said that none but every despicable person acts proudly, and none but a lofty person acts with humility.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are three qualities that are destructive: greed that is obeyed, desires that are followed, and a person’s self-conceit.”

‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When death approached Nûh ؑ, he summoned his two sons and said: ‘I order you to do two things and prohibit you from doing two things. I prohibit you from ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ and pride. I order you to believe that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ. Surely if the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them were to be placed on one pan of the scale, and the words ‘there is none worthy of worship except Allâh’ were to be placed on the other pan, the words ‘there is none worthy of worship except Allâh’ would outweigh them. If the heavens and the earth were in a circle and the words ‘there is none worthy of worship except Allâh’ were placed onto them, it would shatter them. The second thing which I order you to do is to constantly say: *Subhânallâh wa bi Hamdihi* (glory be to Allâh and praise be to Him), for this is the prayer of every creation and it is through it that every creation receives sustenance.”

‘Îsâ ؑ said: “Glad tidings to the person to whom Allâh ﷻ taught His Book and did not die as a tyrant.”

‘Abdullâh ibn Salâm ؓ went into the market place with a bundle of firewood. Someone asked him: “Why are you carrying this when Allâh ﷻ

made you sufficiently rich from carrying this?” He replied: “I want to repulse pride from my self.”

The commentary of al-Qurtubî *rahimahullâh* states the following with regard to this verse:

وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ

“Let them not strike their feet on the ground...” (Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 31)

[This order is actually addressed to women]. If a woman does this in order to make a show or attract men, it is unlawful (*harâm*). In like manner, it is unlawful for men to strike their feet out of conceit. This is because conceitedness is a major sin.

ON KINDNESS TO THE ORPHAN AND ABSTAINING FROM ILL-TREATMENT

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who tends to the orphan and I will be like this in Paradise.” He then demonstrated with his index and middle fingers and left a gap between them.

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The one who tends to an orphan whether he is a relative of his or not, then he and I will be like this in Paradise.” Mâlik [the narrator] demonstrated with his index and middle fingers.

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who tends to an orphan, whether he is a relative of his or not, then he and I will be like this in Paradise.” He then brought his two fingers together.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who brings up three daughters will be in Paradise and he will receive the reward of *amujâhid* who remains in worship at night and fights by day in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who tends to three orphans is like one who spends his night in worship, his day in fasting, and who left in the morning or evening with his sword unsheathed in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. He and I will be like brothers in Paradise just as these two are sisters.” He ﷺ then joined his index and middle fingers.

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ will most certainly admit into Paradise the person who takes an orphan from among the Muslims and includes him in his food and drink, unless he commits a sin that is unpardonable.” Another narration

states: “who tends to an orphan till the latter becomes independent of him, then Paradise most certainly becomes incumbent on him.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The best house of the Muslims is that house in which there is an orphan who is treated with kindness. The worst house of the Muslims is that house in which there is an orphan who is ill-treated.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I will be the first to open the door of Paradise. However, I will see a woman trying to surpass me. I will ask her: ‘What is it with you and who are you?’ She will reply: ‘I am a woman who remained patient in tending to my orphan children.’”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I take an oath by that Being who sent me with the truth, on the day of resurrection Allâh ﷻ will not punish the person who showed mercy to an orphan, who was soft in speech to him, who was affectionate towards him because of his orphancy and weakness, and who was not boastful to his neighbour over what Allâh ﷻ gave him of His grace.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who passes his hand over the head of an orphan solely for the sake of Allâh ﷻ shall receive the reward of good deeds for every hair that his hand passes over. And he who shows kindness to an orphan boy or girl under him, then he and I will be like this.” [He then demonstrated with his index and middle fingers].

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that Allâh ﷻ said to Ya‘qûb عليه السلام that the reason behind his becoming blind, his becoming hunch-backed, and the brothers of Yûsuf عليه السلام doing what they did to him is that once a poor, fasting and hungry orphan came to him, while Ya‘qûb عليه السلام and his family had slaughtered a sheep and ate thereof without feeding that orphan. Allâh ﷻ then informed him that He did not love anything from His

creation as much as He loved the orphans and poor. Allâh ﷻ ordered him to prepare a meal and invite the poor; and he did that.

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who sees to the needs of widows and the poor is like a *mujâhid* in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.” And I think that he also said: “Like a person spending the night in worship without taking a rest and a person fasting without stopping.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person who sees to the needs of widows and the poor is like a *mujâhid* in the cause of Allâh ﷻ, and like the person who spends the night in worship and the day fasting.”

A person of the past said: “In the beginning I was always in a state of intoxication and engrossed in sins. One day, I saw an orphan and showed kindness to him just as one’s own child is shown kindness. In fact, I showed even more kindness than that. I then went to sleep. I saw the az-Zabâniyah (the guards of Hell) seizing me with force and taking me towards Hell. Suddenly, the orphan came in front and said: ‘Leave him till I speak to my Sustainer about him.’ But they refused. Suddenly a voice was heard saying: ‘Let him go, for We have certainly pardoned him his sins for his kindness to him [to the orphan].’ I then got up. Ever since that day, I made an all out endeavour to tend to the orphans.”

A wealthy ‘Alawî (a tribe living in Syria) had a few daughters. He passed away and poverty overcame these daughters. They eventually left their hometown fearing disgrace and humiliation. They went to the masjid of Mahjûrâ. Their mother left them inside and went out in search of food for them. She met a senior man of the town who was a Muslim and explained her situation to him. However, he did not believe her and said: “You will have to produce some proof to me.” She replied: “I am a stranger [to this place and therefore have no proof].” He turned away from her.

She then met a Magean and explained her situation to him. He believed her and sent one of his women with her. The woman brought her back together with her daughters to his house. He went out of his way to see to their needs. When half the night passed, that Muslim [who had refused to help the woman] saw the day of resurrection [in his dream], the Prophet ﷺ sitting with the flag of praise on his head, and a magnificent castle next to him. He asked: "O Messenger of Allâh! For whom is this castle?" He replied: "For a Muslim." The man said: "I am a Muslim, I believe in the oneness of Allâh ﷻ." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Show me your proof for that." The man was at a loss. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ related the story of the 'Alawî woman to him. The man got up extremely grieved and distressed at having refused to help her. He then went out in search for her and was eventually shown to the house of the Magean. He asked the Magean to hand over the woman and her orphan daughters to him but he refused, saying: "I am experiencing all their blessings [ever since they came to my house]." The man said: "Take 1000 dînârs from me and hand them over to me." But he still refused. The man decided to force him. The man said: "I am more eligible for the thing which you desire. The castle which you saw in your dream was created for me. Are you boasting about your Islam before me? By Allâh, my family and I did not sleep till all of us embraced Islam at the hands of the 'Alawî woman. I saw a similar dream like yours, and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to me: 'Is the 'Alawî woman and her daughters with you?' I replied: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allâh!' He said to me: 'The castle is for you and the people of your household.' The Muslim man then turned away with such grief and sorrow known to none but Allâh ﷻ.

ON EATING THE UNLAWFUL

Allâh ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ

“O believers! Do not devour the wealth of each other among yourselves wrongfully...” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 29)

There is difference of opinion as regards the meaning of this. It is said that it refers to usury, gambling, extortion, theft, treachery, false testimony, and the taking of wealth by false oaths.


Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “It refers to everything that man takes without something given in return.”

It is said that when this verse was revealed, the Companions would abstain from eating anything from anyone. Eventually, the following verse was revealed:

وَلَا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ آبَائِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ
أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخَوَاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَعْمَامِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ عَمَّاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخْوَالِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ خَالَاتِكُمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ
مَفَاتِحُهُ أَوْ صَدِيقِكُمْ ۚ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا جَمِيعًا أَوْ أَشْتَاتًا.

“nor any restriction on you that you eat from your houses, or from your fathers’ houses, or your mothers’ houses, or your brothers’ houses, or your sisters’ houses, or your paternal uncles’ houses, or your paternal aunts’ houses, or your maternal uncles’ houses, or your maternal aunts’ houses, or houses whose keys you are in charge of, or from your friends’ houses. There is no sin on you whether you eat together or separately.” (Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 61)

Others are of the opinion that it refers to illegal contracts.

Ibn Mas'ûd  is of the opinion that the above verse is firmly entrenched (*muhkam*), it is not abrogated and cannot be abrogated till the day of resurrection.”

The reason for this is that “devouring wealth wrongfully” includes everything that is taken without having a right to do so – irrespective of whether it is taken wrongfully, e.g. by way of extortion, treachery, theft, whether it is taken in jest and amusement, e.g. by way of gambling and entertainment, whether it is taken through cheating and duping, e.g. through an illegal contract.

What I said is supported by the opinion of some scholars who said that the verse includes every person who deviates himself in wrong by spending in unlawful ways, or deviates others by the above-mentioned ways [i.e. cheating, stealing, etc.].

As for the words:

إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً

“unless it is a hand to hand transaction...” (Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 29)

This is an exception because a transaction in itself is not something that is baseless, irrespective of which meaning is taken. Although a transaction is specifically concerned with contracts of exchange, loans and gifts are included in it by other proofs.

As for the words:

عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ

“by mutual consent” (Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 29)

It means, in a way that is legal [Islamic].

As for the word “devouring or eating”, it is not meant to limit it to that. This word is used because it is the major way of deriving benefit.

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا.

“Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully are only filling their bellies with fire.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 10)

The proofs of this subject and the severe warnings with regard to it from the Sunnah are many. We will suffice with a few of them.

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ is pure and accepts nothing except that which is pure. Surely Allâh ﷻ ordered the believers with the same order that He issued to the Messengers. Allâh ﷻ said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا

“O Messengers! Eat of the pure and do good.” (Sûrah al-Mu’minûn, 23: 51)

Allâh ﷻ said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ

“O believers! Eat of the pure things which We provided for you.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 172)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then related the story of a man who undertakes a lengthy journey, with dishevelled hair and dusty clothing. He stretches out his hands towards the heavens saying: ‘O my Sustainer!’ But his food is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, his clothing is unlawful, and he has been nourished with unlawful. How can his supplication be accepted?!

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The quest for the lawful is compulsory on every Muslim.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The quest for the lawful is compulsory after other compulsory duties.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who eats that which is pure, acts on the Sunnah and keeps the people safe from his mischief, shall enter Paradise.” The Companions y said: “O Messenger of Allâh! This is found a lot in your *ummah* today.” He said: “And so will it be in the generations after me.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If you have four qualities in you, you do not have to bother about whatever else of the world you miss out: (1) safeguarding of trusts, (2) truthfulness in speech, (3) good character, (4) purity in food.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to the person whose earning is pure, whose private life is virtuous, whose public life is honourable, and he keeps his evil away from the people.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Glad tidings to the person who practises on his knowledge, who spends his extra wealth [for the cause of Allâh ﷻ] and withholds his extra speech [i.e. he does not talk more than what is necessary].”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Sa’d! Ensure that your food is pure and you will be one whose supplications are accepted. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is the life of Muhammad, a person casts a single unlawful morsel in his stomach, and his deeds of 40 days are not accepted. Any person whose flesh has been nourished by unlawful, the Hell-fire is more eligible for it.”

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no Islam for he who does not have the quality of trustworthiness. Neither is his salâh nor his zakâh accepted. Surely he who earns some money from unlawful and purchases a shirt with it, his salâh will not be accepted till he removes that shirt from him. Allâh ﷻ is far more honourable and mighty than to accept the deed of a man or his salâh while he is wearing a shirt that was purchased from unlawful wealth.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn ‘Umar ؓ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who purchases a garment for 10 dirhams in which there was a single dirham that was from an unlawful source, Allâh ﷻ will not accept a salâh of his as long as that garment is on him.” He then inserted his two fingers in both his ears and said: “May these become deaf if I did not hear the Prophet ﷺ saying this.”

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who purchases a stolen item while knowing that it is stolen, he is a partner in this reprehensible act and in its sin.”

Al-Hâfiz al-Mundhirî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, for one of you to take his rope, go to the mountain, collect firewood, carry it on his back, and eats [the earnings thereof] is better for him than placing something in his mouth which Allâh ﷻ made unlawful to him.”

Ibn Khuzaymah *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who accumulates unlawful wealth and then gives it in charity shall receive no reward from it, and its sin will be on him.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who earns unlawful wealth and spends thereof in order to free a slave or maintain ties of kinship therewith, it will remain a sin on him.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ distributed your characters among you just as He distributed your sustenance among you. Allâh ﷻ gives this world to those whom He loves and those whom He does not love as well. But He only gives *Dîn* to him whom He loves. He to whom Allâh ﷻ gave *Dîn*, He most certainly loves him. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, a person has not accepted or does not accept till his heart and tongue have accepted or accept. And a person does not have perfect imân till his neighbour is safe from his mischief.” The Companions y asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is his mischief?” He replied: “His deceiving him and his doing wrong to him.” “No person who earns wealth from unlawful sources and then gives it in charity will have it accepted from him, no person spends thereof will have blessings therein, and no person keeps it behind without it being his provision towards the Hell-fire. Allâh ﷻ does not wipe out evil with evil. Rather, He wipes out evil with good. Surely vice cannot wipe out vice.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about that which would cause people to enter the Hell-fire the most. He replied: “The mouth and the private part.” He was asked about that which would cause people to enter Paradise the most. He replied: “The fear of Allâh ﷻ and good character.”

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection, a man will not be able to move until he is questioned about four things: (1) his life and how he spent it, (2) his youth and how he utilised it, (3) his wealth: how he earned it and where he spent it, and (4) his knowledge and where he practised on it.”

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “This world is lush and sweet. He who earns wealth therein from lawful places and spends it in rightful places, Allâh ﷻ will reward him for it and admit him into His Paradise. He who earns wealth therein from unlawful places and spends it in wrong places, Allâh ﷻ will cast him into the abode

of humiliation. There is many a person involved in the wealth of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ who will receive the Hell-fire on the day of resurrection.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنَاهُمْ سَعِيرًا

“Whenever [the fire] abates, We will rekindle it upon them.” (Sûrah Banî Isrâ’îl/al-Isrâ’, 17: 97)

Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Flesh and blood that have been nourished by the unlawful are more worthy of the Hell-fire.” Another narration states: “A body that was nourished by the unlawful will not enter Paradise.”

ON THE PROHIBITION OF USURY

There are many verses on the prohibition of usury. As for the Ahâdîth, they are as follows:

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ cursed the person who tattoos, the person who asks to be tattooed, and person who devours usury, and the person who delegates others for usury.




Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Allâh ﷻ took it upon Himself that He will not admit four people into Paradise and not allow them to enjoy its bounties: (1) the one who is addicted to alcohol, (2) the one who devours usury (3) the one who unjustly devours the wealth of an orphan, (4) the one who is disobedient to his parents."


Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Usury has 73 doors of evil, the least of which is like a person committing adultery with his mother."


Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Usury has over 70 branches and polytheism has the like number."




Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Usury has seventy evils, the least of which is a person having intercourse with his mother."



At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from 'Abdullâh ibn Salâm ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said: "A single dirham which a person receives from usury is far more serious than 33 acts of adultery which a person commits in Islam."




Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ *rahimahullâh*, al-Baghawî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate from ‘Abdullâh  that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Usury entails 72 evils, the least of which is like one who has intercourse with his mother in Islam. And a single dirham from usury is worse than 33 acts of adultery.” He said: “Allâh  will permit obedient and sinful people to stand on the day of resurrection except he who devours usury, for he will not rise except as one whose senses Satan squandered by clinging [to him].”



Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “A single dirham of usury which a person devours knowingly is worse than 36 acts of adultery.”

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate: “The Messenger of Allâh  addressed us and spoke about usury and its seriousness. He said: ‘A single dirham which a man receives as usury is a far more severe sin than 36 acts of adultery which a man commits.’”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who aids an oppressor in a wrong in order to forfeit a right is deprived of the covenant of protection of Allâh  and of His Messenger . He who eats a single dirham of usury, then it is equal to 33 acts of adultery. He who nourishes his flesh with the unlawful, then the Hell-fire is more eligible for him.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate from Abû Hurayrah  that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Usury entails 70 evils, the least of which is for a man to have intercourse with his mother.”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn ‘Abbâs  that the Messenger of Allâh  prohibited that fruit be bought till it is fully grown. He said: “When adultery and usury make their appearance in a place, they have most certainly invited the punishment of Allâh  upon themselves.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn Mas‘ûd  who related a Hadîth from the Prophet  in which he said: “No sooner adultery and usury make

their appearance among a people, they have most certainly invited the punishment of Allâh ﷻ upon themselves.”




Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No sooner usury becomes rife among a people, they are seized by drought. No sooner bribery becomes rife among a people, they are seized by fear.”


Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and al-Asbahânî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The night when I was taken to the seven heavens [the night of Mi‘râj] and we reached the seventh heaven, I looked up and saw thunder, lightning and rumbling. I then came to some people whose stomachs were like houses. There were snakes inside which could be seen from outside their stomachs. I asked: ‘O Jibra’îl! Who are these people?’ He replied: ‘They are the devourers of usury.’”


Al-Asbahânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When I was taken up to the heavens, I looked at the lowest heaven and saw men whose stomachs were as big as huge houses. Their stomachs were bent over and they were arranged one on top of the other on the path of the family of Pharaoh, placed before the Hell-fire every morning and evening. They were constantly saying: ‘O our Sustainer! Don’t let the final hour take place.’ I asked: ‘O Jibra’îl! Who are these people?’ He replied: ‘These are the devourers of usury from your *ummah*. They will not rise except as one whose senses Satan squandered by clinging [to him].’”


In explaining the above, al-Asbahânî *rahimahullâh* said: “They will be heaped on top of each other, and the passers-by from the family of Pharaoh who will be presented to the Hell-fire every morning and evening will trample them.”


At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Adultery, usury and alcohol will become rife before the final hour.”


At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from al-Qâsim ibn ‘Abdillâh al-Warrâq who said: “I saw ‘Abdullâh ibn Abî Aufâ  going to the market of money-exchangers. He addressed them saying: ‘O assembly of money-changers! Take glad tidings.’ They said: ‘May Allâh  give you the glad tidings of Paradise, what glad tidings are you giving us, O Abû Muhammad?’ He replied: ‘The Messenger of Allâh  said to the money-changers: ‘Take the glad tidings of the Hell-fire.’”


At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Beware of sins that are not forgiven: (1) Concealing [the spoils of war and other wealth in which others have a share]. He who conceals, it will be brought forward on the day of resurrection. (2) Devouring usury. He who devours usury will be raised as a mad-man on the day of resurrection.” He then recited this verse: “Those who devour usury will not rise except as one whose senses Satan squandered by clinging [to him]. [\[104\]](#)”

Al-Asbahânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “The devourer of usury will come like a mad-man on the day of resurrection, dragging himself on his side.” He then recited this verse: “will not rise except as one whose senses Satan squandered by clinging [to him].”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “No person increases his share of usury without his eventual results being reduced.”

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Although usury may increase profusely, it is bound towards decrease.”

Imâm Abû Dâ’ûd *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrate from Abû Hurayrah : “There will certainly come a time when there will not remain a single person who did not devour usury. He who does not devour it will get some of its dust [some effects of usury will afflict him].”

‘Abdullâh ibn Ahmad narrates in *Zawâ'id al-Musnad* that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, there will be people from my *ummah* who will sleep on arrogance, pride,

play and amusement. The next morning they will wake up as monkeys and pigs for having considered the prohibitions to be lawful, for having taken singing women, for having consumed alcohol, for having devoured usury, and for having worn silk.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “People from this *ummah* will sleep the night after eating, drinking, playing and amusing themselves. They will wake up the next morning having themselves distorted into monkeys and pigs. The ground will swallow them up and rocks will be flung at them. People will get up in the morning and talk among themselves that such and such family or such and such residential area was swallowed up by the ground. Rocks from the sky will be flung at them as they were flung at the people of Lût عليه السلام. They will be flung at some tribes and some houses for their having drunk alcohol, worn silk, taken singing women, devoured usury, and severed ties of kinship.”

ON THE RIGHTS OF THE SLAVE



The following are some of the rights of a slave: that you greet him when you meet him, you accept his invitation when he invites you, you supplicate for him when he sneezes, you visit him when he falls ill, you attend his funeral when he passes away, you fulfil his oath when he takes an oath by you, you advise him when he seeks your advice, you safeguard him [his honour, wealth, etc.] when he is absent, you love for him what you love for yourself, and you dislike for him what you dislike for yourself. All the above are enumerated in the Ahâdîth.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The Muslims have four rights over you: (1) that you help the one who is righteous, (2) that you seek forgiveness for the one who is a sinner, (3) that you supplicate for the one who has turned back, (4) that you love the one who is their deputy.”


Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه explains the words of the Qur’ân “soft-hearted amongst themselves” as follows: “The righteous Muslims supplicate for the sinful Muslims and vice versa. When a sinful person looks at a righteous person from the *ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ, he should say: ‘O Allâh! Bless him in the good which You destined to him, keep him steadfast on it and enable us to benefit from him.’ When a righteous person looks at a sinful person, he should say: ‘O Allâh! Guide him, relent to him and forgive him his shortcomings.’”


Among the rights of a fellow servant is that he must love for the believers what he loves for himself, and dislike for them what he dislikes for himself.


An-Nu‘mân ibn Bashîr رضي الله عنه narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: “The similitude of the believers in their mutual love and mutual mercy is like that of the body. When a part of the body has a complaint, the entire body responds with fever and sleeplessness.”





Abû Mûsâ  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “A believer is like a building to another believer – strengthening each other.”


Among the rights of a fellow servant is that he should not harm any Muslim by his actions or his words.

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “A true Muslim is he from whose hand and tongue other Muslims are safe.”

There is a lengthy Hadîth in which the Messenger of Allâh  commanded virtuous deeds. In it, he said: “If you are unable to do this, keep your evil away from the people. Surely this is a charity which you will be doing to yourself.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “The most superior of Muslims is he from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe.”

The Messenger of Allâh  asked: “Do you know who a Muslim is?” The Companions y replied: “Allâh  and His Messenger know best.” He said: “A true Muslim is he from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe.” The Companions y asked: “Who is a believer?” He  replied: “He whom the believers trust over their lives and wealth.” The Companions y asked: “Who is an emigrant?” He  said: “He who remains aloof from evil and abstains from it.”

A man asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is Islam?” He replied: “That your heart submits before Allâh  and the Muslims are safe from your tongue and hand.”

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* said: “The inmates of the Hell-fire will be inflicted with scabies. They will scratch it till the bones of one of them becomes exposed from his skin. He will be asked: ‘O person! Does this hurt you?’ He will reply: ‘Yes.’ He will say: ‘This is on account of your hurting the believers.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I saw a person moving around [freely] in Paradise [as a reward] for a tree which he chopped off from the path and which was harming the Muslims.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Teach me something from which I could derive some benefit.” He replied: “Remove harmful objects from the path of the Muslims.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who removes something harmful from the path of the Muslims, Allâh ﷻ records a good deed in his favour. And he for whom Allâh ﷻ records a good deed, He makes Paradise incumbent for him in return for that.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “It is not lawful for a Muslim to point to his brother with a glance that hurts him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “It is not lawful for a Muslim to frighten a Muslim.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ dislikes hurting the believers.”

Ar-Rabî‘ ibn Khaytham *rahimahullâh* said: “People are of two types: a believer – so do not hurt him, an ignorant person – so do not act ignorantly with him.”

Among the rights of a fellow servant is that he should act with humility before every Muslim and he should not act haughtily over him. Surely Allâh ﷻ does not love a proud and conceited person.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ revealed to me saying: ‘You should all act with humility so that no one acts proudly over another. Then if anyone acts proudly over him, he should remain patient.’”

Allâh ﷻ said to His Prophet ﷺ :

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

“Accustom yourself to pardon, enjoin the doing of what is good, and stay aloof from the ignorant ones.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 199)

Ibn Abî Aufâ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to act with humility with every Muslim. He would not act with conceit. He did not feel it below his dignity to walk with widows and the poor in order to fulfil their needs.

Among the rights of a fellow servant is that a person should not pay heed to the rumours of people, nor should he convey the rumours that he heard.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A slanderer will not enter Paradise.”

Al-Khalîl ibn Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said: “He who discloses something to you will disclose something about you. He who informs you of someone else, will inform others about you.”

Among the rights of a fellow servant is that he should not sever relations with the person whom he knows for more than three days, irrespective of how angry he is with him.

Abû Ayyûb al-Ansârî رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “It is not lawful for a Muslim to sever ties with his brother for more than three days. They meet each other but one turns this way and the other turns the other way. The better of the two is the one who greets first.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who dismisses the shortcomings of a Muslim, Allâh ﷻ will dismiss his shortcomings on the day of resurrection.”

‘Ikramah *rahimahullâh* said: “Allâh ﷻ said to Yûsuf ibn Ya‘qûb عليه السلام: ‘It was by virtue of your pardoning your brothers that I elevated your name in both the worlds.’”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ never ever took revenge for himself. However, if the sanctity of Allâh ﷻ was broken, he took revenge for Allâh ﷻ.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “No person pardons a wrong done to him without Allâh ﷻ raising his honour.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No wealth was decreased on account of charity, and Allâh ﷻ only increased a person’s honour on account of his pardon.” Or, “No person humbled himself for the sake of Allâh ﷻ without Allâh ﷻ elevating him.”

ON THE DISAPPROVAL OF FOLLOWING DESIRES, AND ON ABSTENTION

Allâh ﷻ says:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ

“Look at the one who has made his own lust his deity. And Allâh, knowing him as such, led him astray.” (Sûrah al-Jâthiyah, 45: 23)

Ibn Abbâs ؓ said: “That is the unbeliever who adopted his religion without guidance from Allâh ﷻ and without evidence.”

He is completely subjugated to the desires of the soul, following it to wherever it invites him, without following the Book of Allâh ﷻ. It is as though he is worshipping his desires.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

“and do not follow their desires...” (Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 48)

وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“and do not follow the desire of the soul or else it would lead you astray from the path of Allâh.” (Sûrah Sâd, 38: 26)

It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sought refuge from it by the following supplication: “O Allâh! I seek refuge in You from desires that are followed and greed that is obeyed.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are three qualities that are destructive: (1) desires that are followed, (2) greed that is obeyed, (3) a person’s self-conceit.”

The reason for this is that the cause of every act of disobedience is the desires of the soul. It thus herds a person towards the Hell-fire. We seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from this evil trait.

An ‘*ârif* (one who has truly recognized Allâh ﷻ) said: “When two matters come upon you and you do not know which of the two is correct, look at the one which is closer to your desires and act against it.”

It was in this meaning that Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* said:

إذا جال أمرك في معنيين – ولم تدر حيث الخطأ والصواب
فخالف هواك فإن الهوى – يقود النفوس إلى ما يعاب

“When you are confused between two thoughts in a particular matter and you do not know which is correct and which is incorrect, then act contrary to your desires because desires herd the souls towards that which is blameworthy.”

Al-‘Abbâs said: “When two opinions cause confusion to you, abandon the one that you are inclined towards and follow the one that is more difficult on you.”

The essence of this is that the easier matter is easier for you to accomplish, its objective is close, bearing it is easy, and assistance to achieve it comes quickly. A person is therefore inclined to it and the soul is covetous of it. As for the matter that is difficult, it is difficult to accomplish, its objective is far, and assistance to achieve it is slow to come by. The soul is therefore disinclined to it and dislikes to be weighed down by it.

It is related that ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “Suppress these souls because they are always on the look out [to go ahead]. They will extract you towards an evil object. The truth is heavy and bitter. While falsehood is light and sweet.

Abstaining from a sin is easier than turning to repentance. There is many a glance which is sowed by a desire and pleasure of a single moment, but causes grief for a long time.”

Luqmân عليه السلام said to his son: “O my son! The first thing that I warn you against is your soul. Every soul has desires and lusts. If you give vent to its desires, it will persist and demand other desires. Desire is concealed in the heart like fire that is concealed in a rock [e.g. volcanic rock]. If the rock is pierced, the fire is exposed. If it is left as it is, the fire remains concealed.”

A poet said:

إذا ما أجبت النفس في كل دعوة - دعتك إلى الأمر القبيح المحرم

“If you respond to the soul in everything that it invites you towards, it will [eventually] invite you towards a matter that is repugnant, unlawful.”

Another poet said:

إذا أنت لم تعص الهوى قادك الهوى - إلى كل ما فيه عليك مقال

“If you do not disobey your desire, it will drive you towards everything in which some criticism will be made against you.”

Another poet said:

واعلم بأنك لن تسود ولن ترى - طرق الرشاد إذا اتبعت هواك

“You should know that you will never lead and never see the paths of rectitude if you follow your desires.”

Another poet said:

إذا شئت إتيان المحامد كلها - ونيل الذي ترجوه من رحمة الرب
فخالف هوى النفس المسيئة إنه - لأعدى وأردى من هوى الحب
هما سببا حتف الهوى غير أن في - هوى الحب مهما عف بعدا عن الذنب
وجل المعاصي في هوى النفس فاعتمد - بخلاف الذي تمناه إن كنت ذا لب

“If you desire to fulfil all praiseworthy qualities and to acquire the mercy of Allâh which you hope for, then act against the desires of the evil soul. Surely it is a worse enemy and more despicable than the desire of love. They both bring about the destruction of desire. However, the desire of love – the more it is abstained from – the further away it takes one from sin. Most sins are committed because of the desire of the soul. You should therefore act against what the soul desires if you are a person endowed with intelligence.”

إنارة العقل مكسوف بطوع هوى - وعقل عاصي الهوى يزداد تنويرا

“Illuminating the intelligence is eclipsed by obeying desires. On the other hand, the intelligence of the person who disobeys his desires increases in its illumination.”

لقد ترفع الأيام من كان جاهلا - ويردى الهوى ذا الرأي وهو لبيب
وقد تحمد الناس الفتى وهو مخطئ - ويعذل في الإحسان وهو مصيب

“The passing of time elevates the person who was ignorant. While desires humiliate the person of wisdom and intelligence. People at times praise a youth although he is wrong, and he is reprimanded for doing good, although he is correct.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ created the intellect and said to it: ‘Come forward.’ It came forward. He said to it: ‘Go back.’ It went back. He then said: ‘By My might and grandeur, I did not place you except in the creation that is most beloved to Me.’ He created foolishness and said to it: ‘Come forward.’ It came forward. He said to it: ‘Go back.’ It went

back. He then said: ‘By My might and grandeur, I did not place you except in the creation that is most abhorred to Me.’”

A poet said:

وقد أصاب رأيه عين الصواب – من استشار عقله في كل باب
وقد رأى أن الهوى مهما يجب – يدعو إلى سوء العواقب والعقاب

“The person who consults his intellect in every matter has most certainly done the correct thing. He has realized that the desire, no matter how much it compels, invites towards disastrous consequences and an evil torment.”

Another poet said:

إذا شئت أن تحظى وأن تبلغ المني – فلا تسعد النفس المطيعة للهوى
وخالف بها عن مقتضى شهواتها – وإياك أن تحفل بمن ضل أو غوى
ودعها وما تدعو إليه فإنها – لأماراة بالسوء من همٍّ أو مدى
لعلك أن تنجو من النار إنهما – لقاطعة الأمعاء نزاعة الشوى

“If you wish to be fortunate and realize your goals, do not satisfy the soul which is subservient to desires. Act against it in the demands of its desires. Beware of concerning yourself with the one that is astray and deviated. Abandon it and whatever it invites you towards. It most certainly commands evil, causing grief or procrastination. Perhaps you may not be saved from the Hell-fire. If that is the case, it cuts off the bowels, and tears away the liver.”

Someone said: “Desire is a despicable vehicle which conveys you into the pitch darkness of ordeals and tribulations, and an unhealthy grazing ground which compels you into situations of trials. The desire of the soul should therefore not make you ride blameworthy characteristics nor should it compel you into situations where evils are committed.”

A person was asked: “Why don’t you get married?” He replied: “If I was able to divorce my soul, I would have divorced it.” He then said:

تجرد من الدنيا فإنك إنما - سقطت إلى الدنيا وأنت مجرد

“Divest yourself from the world for surely when you fell into the world, you were bare [and denuded, having nothing of it].”

The world is a sleep, the hereafter is wakefulness, and the time between the two is death. And we are in imaginary dreams. He who looks with the eyes of desire is left astounded. He who rules on desire, acts with injustice. He who looks for lengthy periods of time does not reach the objective. A person who is constantly looking [to fulfil his desires] never reaches the end.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The best of your *Dîn* is abstention.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The chief of all deeds is abstention.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be an abstentious person and you will be the most ardent of worshippers. Be a contented person and you will be the most grateful of people.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who does not have piety which keeps him away from the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ when he is in privacy, Allâh ﷻ does not bother in the least about his knowledge.”

Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullâh* said: “Abstention is of three levels: (1) Abstention that is compulsory. It entails abstention from the unlawful. (2) Abstention that brings security. It entails abstention from the doubtful. (3) Abstention that is a virtue. It entails abstention from contentious matters.” This is a beautiful explanation.

Ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh* said: “Abstention entails concealing abstention. When an abstentious person flees from the people, seek such a person. But when he seeks the people, flee from him.”

A poet said:

إني وجدت فلا تظنن غيره - أن التورع عند هذا الدرهم
فإذا قدرت عليه ثم تركته - فاعلم بأن تقاك تقوى المسلم

“I have experienced – and you should therefore not think otherwise – that piety is by this dirham. If you have acquired it and then abandoned it, you should know that the piety of a Muslim has protected you [from love for it].”

إذا المرء لم يزهد وقد صبغت له - بعصفرها الدنيا فليس بزاهد

“If a person is not abstentious when the world dyed itself in red for him, then he is not an abstentious person.”

A wise man said:

تباً لطالب دنیا لا بقاء لها - كأنما هي في تصرفها حلم
صفاؤها كدر سراؤها ضرر - أمانها غرر أبوابها ظلم
شبابها هرم راحاتها سقم - لذاتها ندم وجدانها عدم
لا يستفيق من الأنكاد صاحبها - لو كان يملك ما قد ضمنت ارم
فخل عنها ولا تركن لزهرتها - فإنها نعم في طيها نعم
واعمل لدار نعيم لا نفاد لها - ولا يخاف بها موت ولا هرم

“Destruction to the one who hankers after the world which is not eternal. It is like a dream in its ebb and flow. Its purity is murky. Its prosperity is harmful. Its peace is deceptive. Its good is deceptive. Its youth leads to senility. Its comforts lead to illness. Its pleasures lead to sorrow. Acquiring thereof leads to having nothing. The one who is attached to it does not come out of misfortunes even if he were to possess land that is absolutely barren. Get away from it and do not be inclined towards its splendour, for surely it has comforts in whose folds there is torment. You should rather do deeds for that abode of comfort which never comes to an end, and wherein one neither fears old age nor death.”

Among the wise statements of Yahyâ ibn Mu‘âdh *rahimahullâh* is this: “Let your looking at this world be an admonition, your rejection of it be by choice, your endeavours in it be out of compulsion, and your quest for the hereafter be with haste.”

ON THE DESCRIPTION OF PARADISE AND THE RANKS OF ITS INHABITANTS

The abode whose torments and worries you learnt about, viz. the Hell-fire, there is another abode that is the opposite of it. Ponder over its bounties and pleasures. The person who is kept away from one of these two abodes, will most certainly settle down in the other. Adopt fear from the depth of your heart through lengthy reflection over the torments of Hell. Adopt hope through lengthy reflection over the eternal bounties promised to the inhabitants of Paradise. Herd yourself by the whip of fear and direct it with the rein of hope towards the straight path. In this way, you will achieve the grand kingdom and save yourself from the painful torment.

Ponder over the inhabitants of Paradise with the glow of delight on their faces, made to drink a pure drink that is securely sealed, sitting on pulpits of red sapphires, lying down on couches, laid out on the banks of Paradise, with an uninterrupted supply of [pure] wine and honey, surrounded by young boys and children, adorned with doe-eyed damsels who are so strikingly beautiful that it is as though they are rubies and corals, whom neither man nor jinn would have touched before. They will walk through the different levels of Paradise. If one of them swaggers in her gait, 70 000 youths will carry her sides. She will be wearing rare white silk which would astound the eyes. They will be wearing crowns embedded with pearls and corals. They will be coquettish, flirtatious, perfumed, secure from old-age and misery, confined to tents in palaces of sapphires, built in the center of the gardens of Paradise. These women will be of modest gaze, wide-eyed.

Glasses and jugs, and a cup of pure drink which is white in colour and a delight to the drinkers will be passed around the men and these women. Servants and youths who will be like concealed pearls will be at their beck and call. All this, as a reward for their good deeds. They will be in a place of security, in gardens and fountains, in orchards and rivers, sitting in a seat of truth, in the presence of a Sovereign who has control over all. They will look at the countenance of the Noble King while the splendour of bounties

would have illuminated their faces. Neither darkness nor humiliation will cover their faces. Instead, they will be honoured servants enjoying various types of gifts from their Sustainer. They will be enjoying forever whatever their souls desire. They will neither fear therein nor grieve. They will be secure from the misfortunes of time. They will be living in luxury, eating of the foods of Paradise and drinking from its rivers of milk, wine, honey and water whose smell never changes. Its lands are of silver, its pebbles are corals, its soil has the fragrance of musk, its plants are saffron, rain comes down upon them from a cloud in which there is water from the *nisrîn* (a sweet-smelling flower). They will be sitting on mounds of camphor.

They will be given silver tumblers that are embedded with pearls, sapphires and corals. A tumbler in which is a pure drink that is securely sealed, mixed with sweet *salsabîl* (pure flowing water). Another tumbler will be glittering because of the purity of the jewels that are on it. The drink that is in it will be seen from outside. It will be extremely thin and red in colour. No man ever made such a drink. He would fall short in making anything equal to it and anything as beautiful like it. The drink will be in the palm of a servant whose face will be brilliant like the brilliance of the sun. However, where can the sun ever have the sweetness of his appearance, the beauty of his temples, and the splendour of the pupils of his eyes!?

How surprising, then, that a person who believes in an abode that has such qualities, who is convinced that its inhabitants will never die, that those who settle down in it will never experience any terrors, and whom the ravages of time will never change – how can such a person ever feel inclined to an abode which Allâh ﷻ destined to destruction, and how can he ever enjoy life in an abode [this world] that is less than that abode [Paradise]??!!

By Allâh, if Paradise had nothing except wellbeing of the bodies together with security from death, hunger, thirst and all other types of misfortunes, it would be more appropriate for him to be aloof from the world because of all this, and that he should not give preference to something that is most certain to dwindle and be destroyed.

How much more he should endeavour for Paradise when he knows that its inhabitants will be kings, living in peace, enjoying different types of joy, having whatever they desire for, presenting themselves before the Throne every day, looking at the countenance of Allâh ﷻ, acquiring from this opportunity of looking at Him something which they cannot acquire by looking at all the other pleasures and delights of Paradise. They will not even bother to look at the other pleasures and delights when they look at Allâh ﷻ. They will be enjoying all these different bounties forever and they will be safe from their coming to an end.

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “An announcer will call out: ‘O people of Paradise! The time has come for you to remain healthy without ever falling ill. The time has come for you to live without ever dying. The time has come for you to remain young without ever getting old. The time has come for you to enjoy without ever regretting.’”

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَتُودَعُونَ إِلَىٰ طَلْعِ الْجَنَّةِ أَوْ تَنْتَمُوها بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

“A voice will call out to them: ‘This is Paradise! You have inherited it as compensation for your deeds.’” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 43)

Whenever you want to know about the description of Paradise, read the Qur’ân for there is no better explanation than the explanation of Allâh ﷻ. Read Sûrah ar-Rahmân (Sûrah 55) from verse 46 till the end of the Sûrah. Read Sûrah al-Wâqi‘ah (Sûrah 56) and other Sûrahs as well.

If you want detailed descriptions of Paradise from the Ahâdîth, then ponder over the following details after having read some of them [in the previous paragraphs].

First of all, ponder over the number of the gardens of Paradise.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to the following verse:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ

“Whoever feared standing before his Sustainer, for him are two gardens.” (Sûrah ar-Rahmân, 55: 46)

He ﷺ said: “Two gardens of silver. The utensils and everything else in them are of silver. And two gardens of gold. The utensils and everything else in them are of gold. Between the people and their looking at their Sustainer is no barrier except the cloak of *kibriyâ*’ on His countenance in the Garden of Eden.”

Then look at the doors of Paradise. They are as many as the basic forms of obedience just as the doors of the Hell-fire are as many as the basic forms of disobedience.

Abu Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who spends from two types of his wealth for the cause of Allâh ﷻ, he will be called from all the doors of Paradise; and Paradise has eight doors. He who was from the people of *salâh* will be called from the door of *salâh*. He who was from the people of fasting will be called from the door of fasting. He who was from the people of charity will be called from the door of charity. He who was from the people of *jihâd* will be called from the door of *jihâd*.” Abû Bakr ؓ said: “By Allâh, a person does not have to worry about which door he is called from [as long as he is called into Paradise]. Will anyone be called from all of them?” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Yes, and I hope that you will be one of them [who is called from all eight doors].”

‘Âsim ibn Damurah narrates that ‘Alî ؓ spoke about the Hell-fire and the seriousness of it. I do not remember everything that he said about it. He then quoted this verse with regard to Paradise:

وَسَيُقْبَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا

“Those who continued fearing their Sustainer will be driven towards Paradise in groups.” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 73)

When they reach one of the doors of Paradise, they will find a tree from beneath which two springs will be flowing. They will go to one of them and drink from it. It will remove whatever pain and discomfort they were experiencing in their stomachs. They will then go to the other spring and purify themselves with it. The splendour of bounties will then be impressed upon them. As a result of this, their hair will never change and their heads will never appear dishevelled. It would be as they have been oiled. They will then go to Paradise. The guards of Paradise will say to them:

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوهَا خَالِدِينَ

“Peace be upon you. You are pure people. So enter it, abiding therein forever.” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 73)

The youths of Paradise will meet them and take them around just as the youths of the world take their beloved ones around. These youths will come to them from nowhere and say to the person: “Glad tidings to you, Allâh ﷻ prepared such and such bounties in your honour.” One of those youths will then go to one of the person’s wives from among the doe-eyed damsels and say to her: “Such and such person has come.” He will take the name of the person by which he was called in this world. She will ask: “Did you see him?” He will reply: “Yes, I saw him. He is my master.” Joy will overtake her till she stands at her doorstep. When he reaches his house, he will look at its foundation and see that it is of pearls. Above it is an imposing structure of red, green, yellow and every other colour. He will raise his head and look at the roof, and see that it is like lightning. Were it not for the fact that Allâh ﷻ enabled him to look at it, its brightness would have caused him to lose his eyesight. He will then bow his head and see his wives, cups placed in front, cushions arranged in order, and velvety carpets laid out. He will then lie down and say: “All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ for having guided us to this. We would have not found the way had Allâh ﷻ not guided us.” An announcer will then call out: “You will live without ever dying. You will remain without ever having to move out. You will remain healthy without ever falling ill.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I will come to the door of Paradise on the day of resurrection and ask for it to be opened. The guard will ask: ‘Who are you?’ I will reply: ‘Muhammad.’ He will say: ‘I have been ordered not to open it for anyone before you.’”

Now ponder over the apartments of Paradise and the different levels therein. The last is the biggest and the most superior. Just as there are obvious differences among the people in their outward acts of obedience and their internal praiseworthy characteristics, in like manner there will be obvious differences in what they will be rewarded with. So if you desire the highest stages, you should ensure that no one surpasses you in obedience to Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ ordered us to hasten and compete with each other in this regard. Allâh ﷻ says:

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

“Hasten towards forgiveness from your Sustainer...” (Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 21)

وَفِي ذَٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ

“In that, should they strive those who want to strive.” (Sûrah al-Mutaffifîn, 83: 26)

It is extremely surprising that if your friends or neighbours surpass you in wealth or in their lofty building, it weighs heavily on you or you find it irksome. Your life is disturbed because of the jealousy that overtakes you. Whereas the best of situations for you is to remain in Paradise where you are free from people who surpass you with bounties which the world and all that it contains can never compare with.

Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The inhabitants of Paradise will look at the people of the apartments above them just as you look at a low-lying star in the horizon from the east and west, because of the difference in rank that will exist among them.” The Companions y said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Those are the abodes of the

Prophets. No one else will reach those ranks.” He said: “Indeed. I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, people who believed in Allâh ﷻ and attested to the truthfulness of the Messengers [will also reach high ranks].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Those who are beneath the people of the higher levels will look at them just as you all see the rising star in the horizon. Surely Abû Bakr and ‘Umar are from among them.”

Jâbir رضي الله عنه narrates: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked us: “Should I not inform you of the apartments of Paradise?” I replied: “Indeed, O Messenger of Allâh! May my parents be sacrificed for you.” He said: “There are apartments in Paradise that are made of every different type of jewel. The outside of these apartments will be seen from inside, and the inside will be seen from outside. They have such comforts, luxuries and delights which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and which never crossed the mind of any human.” I asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! For whom are these apartments?” He replied: “For he who extends the greeting (*salâm*) to one and all, who provides food (to people), who keeps fasting all the time, who remains in prayer at night while the people are sleeping.” We asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who can do all that?” He replied: “My *ummah* can do that. Now let me inform you about it. He who meets his brother and greets him, he has certainly extended the greeting. He who provides food to his wife and children till he satiates them, he has certainly provided food. He who fasts in the month of Ramadân and for three days of every other month, he has certainly kept fasting all the time. He who offers the *‘ishâ salâh* and the *fajr salâh* in congregation, has certainly remained in prayer while the people are sleeping.” In other words, the Jews, Christians and Magaens.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about this verse:

وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ

“and beautiful mansions in the gardens of eternity.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 72)

He said: “Palaces made of pearls. Each palace will have 70 houses made of rubies. Each house will have 70 sub-houses made of green chrysolite. Each sub-house will have a bed. On each bed will be 70 cushions of every colour. On every cushion will be a wife from the doe-eyed damsels [of Paradise]. Every sub-house will have 70 dining tables. Every dining table will have 70 different types of food. Every sub-house will hve 70 maids in waiting. The believer will be given enough strength every morning to go to all these pleasures and delights at once.”

ON PATIENCE, PLEASURE AND CONTENTMENT

As for the virtue of pleasure, the following Qur'ânic verses are applicable:

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

“Allâh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him.” (Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 119)

Allâh ﷻ says:

كُلُّ جَزَاءٍ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ

“What is the reward of goodness but goodness?” (Sûrah ar-Rahmân, 55: 60)

The peak of goodness is Allâh's ﷻ pleasure with His servant. And it is the reward for the servant's pleasure with Allâh ﷻ.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَمَسَاكِينٍ طَيِّبَةٍ فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ

“and beautiful mansions in the gardens of eternity.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 72)

The pleasure of Allâh ﷻ is the greatest. Allâh ﷻ elevated pleasure above the Gardens of Eden just as He elevated His remembrance above salâh when He said:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ط وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

“Surely salâh restrains [man] from indecency and evil. And the remembrance of Allâh is the greatest.” (Sûrah al-'Ankabût, 29: 45)

Just as the ability to see the Being who is remembered in salâh is greater than salâh itself, in like manner, the pleasure of the Lord of Paradise is greater than Paradise itself. In fact, it is the chief objective of the inhabitants of Paradise.

A Hadîth states: “Allâh ﷻ appears before the believers and says: ‘Ask Me.’ They reply: ‘We want Your pleasure.’” Their asking for His pleasure after seeing Him is the peak of giving preference. As for the pleasure of the servant, we will mention its essence.

As for Allâh’s ﷻ pleasure with the servant, it is in another meaning – very close to what we had mentioned as regards Allâh’s ﷻ love for the servant. It is not possible to fathom its essence because the intelligence of the creation fall short in comprehending this. He who has the ability to fathom it, it is for himself only. In short, there is no rank above looking at Allâh ﷻ. The reason why they asked Him for His pleasure is that it is the cause for the continuous ability to see Him. When they were blessed with the bounty of looking at Him, they considered it to be the peak of all objectives and the furthest of all hopes. When they were ordered to ask Him, they asked for nothing but the continuation of this bounty. And they knew that His pleasure is the cause for the continuation of the lifting of the veil [whereby they could continue seeing Him].

Allâh ﷻ says:

هُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ

“For them is whatever they desire, and with Us is even more.” (Sûrah Qâf, 50: 35)

In the commentary to this verse, some commentators say: At the time when the people of Paradise are to receive more, three gifts will come to them from Allâh ﷻ: (1) A gift from Allâh ﷻ, the like of which they do not have in Paradise. This is referred to in the following verse:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ

“So no soul knows what bliss is in store for them – a recompense for what they used to do.” (Sûrah as-Sajdah, 32: 17)

(2) A greeting of peace from their Sustainer. This will be an addition to the first gift. Allâh ﷻ says:

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبِّ رَحِيمٍ

“Peace! A word from the merciful Sustainer.” (Sûrah Yâ Sîn, 36: 58)

(3) Allâh ﷻ will say to them: “I am pleased with you.”

This will be more superior to the first gift and to the greeting of peace. This is based on the following words of Allâh ﷻ:

وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

“But the pleasure of Allâh is the greatest.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 72)

In other words, it is greater than all the other bounties that they are enjoying. So this is the virtue of the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ and it is the fruit of the pleasure of the servant.

As for the virtue of pleasure from the Traditions, it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ asked a group of his Companions: “What are you?” They replied: “We are believers.” He asked: “What is the sign of your îmân?” They replied: “We exercise patience at the time of calamity, we are grateful at the time of prosperity, and we are pleased with whatever destiny has decided for us.” He ﷺ said: “I take an oath by the Lord of the Ka‘bah that you are most certainly believers.”

Another narration states that he said to them: “They are very wise and knowledgeable people. Their deep understanding could almost make them

Prophets.”

A Hadîth states: “Glad tidings to the person who is guided to Islam, whose sustenance is sufficient for him, and is pleased with it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who is pleased with little sustenance from Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ is pleased with little actions from him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When Allâh ﷻ loves a servant. He puts him through trials and tribulations. If he exercises patience, He chooses him. If he is pleased, He selects him [for His close proximity].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the day of resurrection, Allâh ﷻ will cause wings to grow for a group of my followers. They will fly from their graves to the gardens of Paradise. They will move about therein and enjoy themselves therein as they wish. The angels will ask them: ‘Did you’ll see the reckoning of deeds?’ They will reply: ‘We did not see any reckoning whatsoever.’ The angels will ask them: ‘Did you’ll cross the *Sirât*?’ They will reply: ‘We did not see any *Sirât*.’ The angels will ask them: ‘Did you’ll see Hell?’ They will reply: ‘We did not see anything.’ The angels will ask them: ‘From which *ummah* are you?’ They will reply: ‘From the *ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ.’ The angels will say: ‘We ask you in the name of Allâh, tell us what your deeds were in the world.’ They will reply: ‘There were two qualities in us which enabled us to reach this rank by virtue of the mercy of Allâh ﷻ.’ The angels will ask: ‘What are they?’ They will reply: “‘When we were in solitude, we used to be ashamed of disobeying Him. And we used to be pleased with the little that was destined for us.’ The angels will say: ‘You deserve this [great reward].’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O assembly of poor people! Give to Allâh ﷻ your pleasure from your hearts and you will acquire the reward of your poverty. If not, you will not acquire this reward.”

It related in the Traditions of Mûsâ ؑ that the Banî Isrâ’îl said to him: “Ask your Sustainer something which if we do, He will be pleased with us.”

Mûsâ عليه السلام said: “O my Allâh! You have heard what they said.” Allâh ﷻ said: “O Mûsâ! Tell them to be pleased with Me till I am pleased with them.”

As for the virtue of patience, this is mentioned in over 90 places in the Qur’ân. It adds most of the ranks and acts of goodness to patience and made these ranks the fruits of patience. It brings together many matters for the patient ones which it did not bring together for others. Allâh ﷻ says:

أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَعْتَلُونَ

“Upon such people are the bounties of their Sustainer and mercy. And it is they who are on the straight path.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 157)

So guidance, mercy and bounties are all brought together [in this verse] for the patient ones.

If we had to cover all the verses with regard to patience, this section would become very lengthy.

As for the Ahâdîth, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Patience is half of îmân.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The least that you have been given is conviction and the resolve for patience. He who is given his share thereof, will not bother about what he misses of spending the night in worship and the day in fasting. That you be patient over the condition in which you are in is more beloved to me than each one of you coming to me with deeds similar to that of all of you together. However, I fear that the world be opened before you after me. You will thus dislike each other. Consequently, the inhabitants of the heavens will dislike you. He who remains patient and expects to be rewarded would have acquired his full reward.” He then recited this verse:

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ ط وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا
أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“All that is by you is bound to come to an end, and all that is by Allâh is everlasting. We shall certainly grant to those who are patient their reward for the good deeds that they used to do.” (Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 96)

Jâbir رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about îmân. He said: “It entails patience and forbearance.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Patience is one of the treasures of Paradise.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was once asked about îmân. He said: “It is îmân.”

This is similar to his ﷺ words: “The pilgrimage is ‘Arafah.” This means that the major and most important aspect of the pilgrimage is ‘Arafah.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The most superior of deeds are those upon which the souls are imposed.”

It is said that Allâh ﷻ addressed Dâ’ûd عليه السلام saying: “Adopt My characteristics. And from among My characteristics is that I am extremely patient.”

‘Atâ’ *rahimahullâh* narrates that Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه said: “When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went to the Ansâr, he asked them: ‘Are you believers?’ They remained silent. So ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: ‘Yes, O Messenger of Allâh.’ He asked: ‘What is the sign of your îmân?’ They replied: ‘We are grateful at the time of prosperity, we are patient at the time of calamity, and we are pleased with destiny.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘I take an oath by the Lord of the Ka‘bah, you are most certainly believers.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is a lot of good in exercising patience over what you dislike.”

‘Îsâ عليه السلام said: “You cannot acquire what you love except by exercising patience over what you dislike.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If patience was a man, he would have been most noble. And Allâh ﷻ loves those who are patient.”

There are numerous other Ahâdîth in this regard.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The one who is content is honourable and the one who is covetous is despicable.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Contentment is a treasure that never comes to an end.”

The discussion on contentment was repeated several times.

ON THE VIRTUE OF RELIANCE ON ALLÂH I

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

“Allâh loves those who place their trust in Him.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 159)

The highest rank a person can attain is the love of Allâh ﷻ. In addition to this, Allâh ﷻ guarantees to provide him with sufficient clothing. So the person for whom Allâh ﷻ is sufficient, who suffices him and who loves him, then he has indeed acquired the supreme triumph. This is because the person who is loved is neither punished, kept at a distance, nor concealed from.

Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I saw all the different nations and saw that my followers have filled all the valleys and mountains. I was astonished by their large numbers and their appearance. I was asked: ‘Are you pleased?’ I replied: ‘Yes.’ It was said: ‘In addition to all these are another 70 000 who will enter Paradise without reckoning.’ He was asked: ‘Who are they, O Messenger of Allâh?’ He replied: ‘They are those who do not burn themselves, who do not involve themselves in evil omens, who do not seek spells [and charms], and who place their trust on their Sustainer.’” ‘Ukâshah ؓ stood up and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Supplicate to Allâh ﷻ to make me among them.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Allâh, make him among them.” Another person stood up and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Supplicate to Allâh ﷻ to make me among them.” He replied: “‘Ukâshah beat you to it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If you place your trust in Allâh ﷻ as you ought to, He will give you sustenance as He gives sustenance to the

bird. It leaves with an empty stomach in the morning and returns with a full stomach in the evening.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who severs himself [from everyone and turns to] Allâh ﷻ alone, Allâh ﷻ will fulfil every need of his and give him sustenance from avenues he did not even imagine. And he who severs himself to the world, Allâh ﷻ will leave him to it.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who would like to be the wealthiest of people should have more reliance on what Allâh ﷻ has than what he has in his own hands.”

It is related that when dire conditions afflicted the family of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, he would say: “Stand up for salâh.” He would say to them: “This is what Allâh ﷻ commanded me to do.” Allâh ﷻ says:

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

“Command your house people to establish salâh and you yourself remain steadfast on it.” (Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 132)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who seeks charms and to burn himself is not one who placed his trust in Allâh ﷻ.”

It is related that when Ibrâhîm عليه السلام was flung into the fire with a catapult, Jibra'il عليه السلام asked him: “Is there anything I can do for you?” He replied: “As for you, there is nothing that you can do for me.” This was in fulfilment of what Ibrâhîm عليه السلام had said: “Allâh ﷻ is sufficient for me, and what a great dispenser of affairs He is!” He had made this statement when he was captured in order to be flung into the fire. Allâh ﷻ revealed this verse:

وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّى

“And of Ibrâhîm who was true to his word.” (Sûrah an-Najm, 53: 37)

Allâh ﷻ addressed Dâ'ûd عليه السلام saying: "O Dâ'ûd! When a servant holds on firmly to Me without turning to My creation, then even if the skies and the earth were to plot and plan against him, I will make a way out for him."

Sa'îd ibn Jubayr *rahimahullâh* said: "A scorpion bit me so my mother took an oath that she will most certainly take me to a sorcerer. She then showed my hand that was not bitten to the sorcerer. In the meantime, al-Khawwâs recited this verse:

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ

"Place your trust in the Living One who never dies..." (Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 58)

He then said: "It is not appropriate for a person to resort to anyone other than Allâh ﷻ after reciting this verse."

A scholar was told in his dream: "He who places his trust in Allâh ﷻ has in fact obtained his sustenance."

A scholar said: "The sustenance that is guaranteed to you should not keep you preoccupied from fulfilling the deeds that are compulsory on you. If you allow this to happen, you will squander your matters with regard to the hereafter and you will not acquire of this world except that which Allâh ﷻ destined for you."

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh *rahimahullâh* said: "When a person obtains sustenance without seeking it, it is a sign that sustenance is commanded to seek out the person."

Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullâh* said: "I asked a monk: 'Where do you get your food from?' He replied: 'I have no knowledge in this regard. However, you may ask my Sustainer from where He feeds me.'"

A person said: "When I am pleased with Allâh ﷻ as the dispenser of my affairs, I find a way to every good."

We ask Allâh ﷻ for good etiquette.

ON THE VIRTUE OF THE MUSJID

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

“Only he shall inhabit the musjids of Allâh who believed in Allâh and the last day...” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 18)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who builds a masjid for the sake of Allâh, even if it is like the size of the nest of the sand-grouse, Allâh ﷻ will build a palace for him in Paradise.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who is fond of the masjid, Allâh ﷻ is fond of him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When any of you enters the masjid, he should offer two rak‘ats of salâh before sitting down.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no salâh for the person who lives in the vicinity of the masjid except in the masjid.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The angels pray for one of you as long as he remains at the spot where he offers salâh. The angels pray thus: ‘O Allâh! Shower him with Your mercy. O Allâh! Have mercy on him. O Allâh! Forgive him.’ They continue praying thus as long as he does not talk or comes out of the masjid.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Towards the latter part of time, such people from my *ummah* will come to the masjid who will sit in circles upon circles talking about the world and the love for the world. Do not sit in their company for Allâh ﷻ has no need for such people.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ said in some Book: ‘My houses on earth are the musjids. My visitors therein are those who inhabit them. So glad tidings to the person who purifies himself at his house and then visits Me in My house. For it is the duty of the one who is visited to honour the person who visits him.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If you see a person frequenting the masjid, testify to his îmân.”

Sa‘îd ibn al-Musayyib *rahimahullâh* said: “He who sits in the masjid, he is in fact sitting with his Sustainer. It is therefore his duty to say nothing but good.”

It is related thus: “Speaking in the masjid devours good deeds just as animals devour grass.”

An-Nakha‘î *rahimahullâh* said: “The people of the past were of the opinion that walking to the masjid on a dark night makes Paradise compulsory.”

Anas ibn Mâlik ؓ said: “He who puts on a light in the masjid, the angels and the bearers of the Throne continue seeking forgiveness for him as long as that light remains in the masjid.”

‘Alî ؓ said: “When a person passes away, that spot where he used to offer salâh on earth and that place where his deeds climb to in the heavens both cry for him.” He then recited this verse:




فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنظَرِينَ

“Then neither did the heavens nor the earth cry over them. Nor did they receive any respite.” (Sûrah ad-Dukhân, 44: 29)

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “The earth cries for him for 40 days.”

‘Atâ’ al-Khurâsânî *rahimahullâh* said: “No person performs a prostration for Allâh ﷻ on a spot of ground without that spot testifying in his favour

on the day of resurrection, and without it crying for him on the day he passes away.”

Anas ibn Mâlik  said: “No spot of earth on which Allâh  is remembered either through salâh or remembrance without that spot boasting over the other spots that are around it. It rejoices with the remembrance of Allâh  right till its deepest part – the last of the seven earths. No person stands up to offer salâh without the earth adorning itself for him.”

It is said: “There is no place at which a people get off without that place praying for them or cursing them [depending on what actions they do there].”




ON SPIRITUAL EXERCISE AND THE VIRTUE OF PEOPLE OF HONOUR


You should know that when Allâh ﷻ wills good for a person, He enables him to see his own faults. He whose sight is a window from which his faults are not concealed, and is thus able to recognize the faults, will be able to seek a treatment. However, most of the people are ignorant of their own faults. A person will see a small speck of dirt in his brother's eye but will not see a lot of filth in his own eye. There are four ways for the person who would like to see his own faults:

(1) He should sit in the company of a *shaykh* who has insight with regard to the faults of the soul and who has knowledge of subtle [and hidden] impediments. The person must give him command over his self and follow his instructions in his striving. This is the position of a *murîd* with his *shaykh* and a student with his teacher. His teacher and his *shaykh* will show him the faults of his self and also show him the way of treating these. In today's times, it is difficult to find this.

(2) He should seek a true, insightful and religious friend. He should appoint him as a guard over his self so that he may watch his conditions and actions. He should then draw his attention to whatever he dislikes of his internal and external mannerisms and faults. This used to be the practice of the intelligent and elders from among the imâms of Islam.

‘Umar ﷺ used to say: “May Allâh ﷻ show mercy to the person who presents my faults to me.” He used to ask Salmân about his faults. When he came to him, he asked him: “What did you hear about me which you dislike?” He declined to say anything. However, ‘Umar ﷺ insisted. So he said: “I have heard that you had two different types of food on the dining table and that you have two outfits: one which you wear during the day and another for the night.” He asked him: “Did you hear anything else?” He replied: “No.” ‘Umar ﷺ said: “As for these two, I have done away with them.”

‘Umar  used to ask Hudhayfah  as well and say to him: “You were the confidant of the Messenger of Allâh  with regard to the hypocrites. Do you see any traces of hypocrisy in me?”

Despite his great position and lofty status, this is how ‘Umar  used to take stock of himself. The more intelligent a person is and the higher the position he holds, the less conceited he is and the more he questions his self. This quality is also very difficult to find today. There are very few friends who abandon flattery and inform a person of his faults or give up jealousy. Such a friend will only do or say what is necessary, and nothing more. From among your friends, you will certainly have one who is envious or one who has ulterior motives. Such a person will consider something that is not a shortcoming in you to be a shortcoming. Or you will find one who constantly flatters you. He will therefore conceal some of your faults from you [and not inform you thereof].

It was for this reason that Dâ’ûd at-Tâ’î *rahimahullâh* remained aloof from people. He was asked: “Why do you not mix with people?” He replied: “What should I do with people who conceal my faults from me?”

It was thus the desire of the religious people to become aware of their faults by others informing them thereof. As for people like us, the situation is such that the most abhorred in our sight are those who advise us and inform us of our faults. This is most likely an exposition of the weakness of our î mân. Evil characteristics are poisonous snakes and scorpions. If someone were to inform us that there is a scorpion under our clothing, we would consider it to be a great favour from him and we would be most pleased with him. We would engross ourselves in removing that scorpion, taking it far away and killing it. We will do all this although its harm is only on the body and the pain that it will cause will only be for a day or so. As for the harm of evil characteristics, that is in the depths of one’s heart. I fear that this harm will continue forever after death or for thousands of years. In addition to this, we are not pleased with the person who draws our attention to these shortcomings of ours. We do not try to remove them. Instead, we engross ourselves by responding to the person who advises us by saying something similar to him. We will say to him: “You also, you commit such and such evils.” Our enmity with him preoccupies us from taking benefit from his

advice. This is due to the hardness of the heart which was caused by excessive sinning. The basis of all this is weakness of îmân.

We ask Allâh ﷻ to inspire us towards rectitude, to show us our faults, occupy us in treating our faults, and to enable us to be grateful to the person who informs us of our evils. We ask Allâh ﷻ to bless us with all this by His favour and grace.

(3) He must be able to recognize the faults of his self from his enemies. This is because the eye of enmity exposes evils. It is possible that the benefit a person will get from a malicious enemy who mentions his faults to him will be far greater than his benefiting from a friend who flatters him, adulates him, praises him, and conceals his faults from him. But the natural tendency is to reject what the enemy says and consider whatever he says to be based on jealousy. However, an insightful person takes benefit from the statements of his enemies because his evils will most certainly be mentioned and spread by them.

(4) He must mix and intermingle with the people. Whatever evil he sees in the people, he should take his self to account for it and attribute it to himself. This is because the believer is a mirror of a believer. From the faults of others, he sees his own faults. He realizes that the temperaments are similar in following desires. Therefore, if one of the contemporaries have a particular trait, the other will most certainly have something similar to it, greater than it or part of it. He should therefore examine his self and purify it of everything which he finds offensive in others. This will be sufficient as a chastisement for him. If all the people give up what they dislike in others, they will not need anyone to rectify them.

If you ponder over what we said with the eye of admonition, your sight will automatically open and the ailments, sicknesses and treatments of the hearts will be exposed to you by virtue of the light of knowledge and conviction. If you are unable to do this, then the opportunity of attesting and believing by way of learning and following someone who is worthy of being followed should not be missed.

Îmân has one level and knowledge has another level. Knowledge is acquired after îmân, and it comes after it. Allâh ﷻ says:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

“Allâh will raise the ranks of those who believe among you and those who have been given knowledge.” (Sûrah al-Mujâdilah, 58: 11)

He who attests to the fact that acting against the desires is the path towards Allâh ﷻ but does not have knowledge of its cause and mystery, is from among those who have îmân. But once he acquires knowledge of what we mentioned as regards the desires, he is from among those who have been bestowed with knowledge. Allâh ﷻ has promised Paradise to both.

There are numerous instances from the Qur’ân, the Sunnah and the statements of the ‘ulamâ’ which necessitate belief in this subject. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ، فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

“and stopped his soul from desires, then Paradise alone is his abode.” (Sûrah an-Nâzi‘ât, 79: 40-41)

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ

“it is they whose hearts Allâh has tested for piety.” (Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 3)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A believer is placed between five difficulties: a believer who is envious of him, a hypocrite who detests him, an unbeliever who fights him, Satan who leads him astray, a soul that disputes with him.”

He thus made it clear that the soul is an enemy that disputes with him. It is therefore necessary for man to strive against it.

It is related that Allâh ﷻ addressed Dâ'ûd عليه السلام saying: "Caution and warn your companions as regards the devouring of desires. Surely the intellects of the hearts that are attached to the desires of the world are concealed from Me [in other words, such intellects are not mindful of Me]."

Îsâ عليه السلام said: "Glad tidings to the person who abandons a present desire for an absent promise which he did not see."

Our Prophet ﷺ said to a group of people who returned from jihâd: "Welcome to you. You have returned from a minor jihâd to a major jihâd." He was asked: "O Messenger of Allâh! What is the major jihâd?" He said: "Waging jihâd against the soul."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "A *mujâhid* is one who strives against his soul in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ."

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said: "I have not confronted anything more difficult on me than my soul. Sometimes it is in my favour and sometimes it is against me."

Abû al-'Abbâs al-Mausalî *rahimahullâh* used to say to his soul: "You can neither enjoy yourself in this world with the sons of kings nor can you strive hard with the servants in the quest for the hereafter. It is as though I am trapped with you between Paradise and the Hell-fire. O my soul! Are you not ashamed?"

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: "A defiant animal is not more in need of a strong bridle than your soul."

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh ar-Râzî *rahimahullâh* said: "Strive against your soul with the swords of spiritual exercises. Spiritual exercises are undertaken in four ways: (1) the most essential and basic of foods, (2) a blink of sleep, (3) speaking only when absolutely necessary, (4) bearing pain from all people. Eating less will result in the death of desires, sleeping less will result in purity of intentions, speaking less will result in safety from calamities, bearing pain will enable one to reach one's objectives."

He also said: “The enemies of man are three: his world, his Satan, and his soul. Be on your guard from the world by abstention in it. Be on your guard from Satan by going against him. Be on your guard from your soul by abandoning desires.”

A wise person said: “The person who is overcome by his soul becomes a prisoner in the love of its desires. He is confined in the prison of its desires. He is overpowered and shackled. His reins are in its hands. It drags him wherever it likes. It deprives his heart of benefits.”

Ja‘far ibn Humayd *rahimahullâh* said: “The ‘ulamâ’ and wise sages unanimously say that the pleasures of the hereafter cannot be achieved without abandoning the pleasures of the world.”

Abû Yahyâ al-Warrâq *rahimahullâh* said: “He who pleases the limbs with desires has in fact planted the tree of regrets in his heart.”

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward *rahimahullâh* said: “Anything [food] more than bread is desires.” He also said: “He who loves the desires of the world should be prepared for disgrace and humiliation.”

It is related that the wife of the ‘Azîz [of Egypt] said to Yûsuf عليه السلام after he took control of the treasury. She was sitting on the side of the road on the day that his procession normally passed by. He was riding pass in a procession of over 12 000 dignitaries of his kingdom. She said: “Glory to the One [Allâh سبحانه] who reduces kings into slaves on account of disobedience, and raises slaves into kings on account of obedience to Him. Greed and desires have both reduced kings to slaves. This is the recompense of those who cause corruption. Patience and piety have both elevated slaves to kings.” On hearing this, Yûsuf عليه السلام said, as Allâh سبحانه conveyed of him:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“Surely whoever is fearful and patient, Allâh does not destroy the reward of the righteous.” (Sûrah Yûsuf, 12: 90)

Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: “I got up one night and stood up to engage in my worship. I did not experience the sweetness which I normally used to experience. I decided to go back to sleep but could not fall asleep. I sat up but could not remain seated. So I went outside. I saw a man wrapped in a cloak, fallen on the ground. When he perceived my presence, he said: ‘O Abû al-Qâsim! Have you come to me at this hour?!’ I replied: ‘It was not intended.’ He said: ‘Indeed. I asked Allâh ﷻ to shake your heart for me.’ I said: ‘He has done that. Now what is it that you want?’ He said: ‘When will the ailment of the soul become its cure?’ I replied: ‘When the soul opposes the desires of the soul.’ He then turned to his soul and addressed it saying: ‘Listen! I gave you this same reply seven times but you refused to hear it except from al-Junayd. Here, you have now heard it from him.’ He then turned and went away. I did not know who he was.”

Yazîd ar-Ruqâshî *rahimahullâh* said: “Don’t bring cold water to me in this world. Perhaps I will not be deprived of it in the hereafter.”

A person asked ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh*: “When should I speak?” He replied: “When you desire to remain silent.” He asked: “When should I remain silent?” He replied: “When you desire to speak.”

‘Alî ﷻ said: “He who yearns for Paradise should free himself of desires in the world.”

ON ÎMÂN AND HYPOCRISY

You should know that perfection in îmân entails testifying to the oneness of Allâh ﷻ, testifying to all that the Messengers ﷺ came with, with addition to doing good deeds. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ.

“The true believers are they who believe in Allâh and in His Messenger, and thereafter have no doubt; and who fight in the cause of Allâh with their wealth and their lives. It is they who are the truthful ones.” (Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 15)

وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ

“but great virtue is of him who believes in Allâh, and the last day, and the angels, and all the Books, and the Prophets...” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 177)

In the above verse, Allâh ﷻ lays down 20 attributes [of virtuous people], such as fulfilling promises, excercising patience over difficulties, etc. He then says: “These are the people who are true.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

“Allâh will raise the ranks of those who believe among you and those who have been given knowledge.” (Sûrah al-Mujâdilah, 58: 11)

لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتِلَ

“Not equal are those of you who spent before the conquest of Makkah and fought [and those who did not do so].” (Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 10)

هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

“People are on different levels in the sight of Allâh.” (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 163)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Îmân is naked and piety is its garment.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Îmân has over 70 parts. The least of which is removing something harmful from the path.”



All the above shows that perfection of îmân is strongly connected to good deeds. As for its strong connection with being free of hypocrisy and subtle polytheism (*ash-shirk al-khafîyy*), this is gauged from the statement of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when he said: “Four qualities, if found in a person, then he is an absolute hypocrite even if he keeps fast, offers salâh and claims that he is a believer. [They are]: (1) when he speaks, he lies, (2) when he makes a promise, he breaks it, (3) when he is entrusted, he breaches that trust, (4) when he disputes, he is vulgar.” Some narrations state: “When he enters into a pact, he acts treacherously.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The majority of the hypocrites of this *ummah* are its *qurrâ*’ (the reciters of the Qur’ân).”

A Hadîth states: “Polytheism is more concealed in my *ummah* than the crawling of a bee on a rock.”




Hudhayfah ؓ said: “A person would utter a statement during the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and will thereby become a hypocrite till he dies. But now I hear you people making such statements ten times in a day.”



A scholar said: “The person who is closest to hypocrisy is he who considers himself to be free of hypocrisy.”


Hudhayfah  said: “The hypocrites today are far more than those who were present in the time of the Messenger of Allâh  . At that time, they used to conceal their hypocrisy. Today, people are openly displaying their hypocrisy.”

This hypocrisy is the opposite of true and perfect î mân. It is a subtle form of hypocrisy. The person who is furthest away from it is he who fears it, and the person who is closest to it is he who considers himself to be free of it.

Someone said to al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* that people say that there is no hypocrisy today. So he said: “O my brother! If all the hypocrites were destroyed, you will be scared to walk on the roads [because they will be so deserted].” It is related that he [al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh*] or someone else said: “If the hypocrites were to have tails, we would not be able to place our feet on the ground [because it would be filled with tails and we will have no place to place our feet].”

Ibn ‘Umar  heard a person criticizing al-Hajjâj, so he asked him: “Tell me, if al-Hajjâj was present here and listening to you, would you talk about him [as you are at present]?” The man replied: “No.” Ibn ‘Umar  said: “We used to consider this to be hypocrisy in the time of the Messenger of Allâh  .”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who is two-tongued in this world, Allâh  will make two tongues for him in the hereafter.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “The worst of people is he who is two-faced. He goes to one group of people posing to be someone, and to another group posing to be someone else.”

Someone asked al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* that some people say: “We do not fear hypocrisy.” He replied: “By Allâh, if I knew with certainty that I am free of hypocrisy it will be more beloved to me than the hills of earth made of gold.”

Al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* said: “Contradiction between the tongue and heart, between ones private and public life, and between delving into something and coming out of it are all considered to be from hypocrisy.”

A man said to Hudhayfah رضي الله عنه: “I fear being a hypocrite.” He said: “If you were a hypocrite you would not have feared hypocrisy. A hypocrite considers himself safe from hypocrisy.”

Ibn Abî Malîkah *rahimahullâh* said: “I met 130, and in another narration, 150 Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. All of them feared hypocrisy.”

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was sitting with a group of his Companions y. They started talking about a man and showered a lot of praises on him. While they were busy talking, the man came before them with his face dripping with water from the *wudû'* which he just made. He was holding his sandals in his hand and the mark of prostration was on his forehead. On seeing him, the Companions y said: “O Messenger of Allâh! This is the man about whom we were talking.” The Prophet ﷺ said: “I see the black spot of Satan on his face.” The man eventually reached them, greeted them and sat down with them. The Prophet ﷺ said to him: “I ask you in the name of Allâh, when you were coming towards these people, did you think to yourself that there is no one from among them who is better than you?” He replied: “I swear by Allâh that this is what I thought.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said in his supplication: “O Allâh! I seek Your forgiveness for that which I know and that which I do not know.” Someone asked him: “Do you also fear, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “What is there to make me feel secure when the hearts are between two fingers of the Merciful [Allâh ﷻ]. He turns them as He wills.”


Allâh ﷻ says:

وَيَدَا هُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ

“And there will appear before them, from Allâh, what they did not even imagine.” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 47)

It is said in the commentary to this verse that they did deeds which they assumed to be good deeds but they were in the pan of evil deeds.

Surîy as-Saqatî *rahimahullâh* said: “If a person entered a garden in which there is every type of tree on which there is every type of bird, and every bird addresses him by saying: ‘Peace be on you, O *walî* (close friend) of Allâh!’ And his soul is pleased with this, he is most certainly a prisoner in its [his soul’s] hands.”

These Traditions and narrations will make you realize the danger of this matter [of hypocrisy] on account of the subtleness of hypocrisy and subtle polytheism, and that none is safe from this. So much so that ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb *rahimahullâh* used to ask Hudhayfah  whether he [‘Umar] is mentioned in the list of the hypocrites.

Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî *rahimahullâh* said: “I heard something from one of the leaders and I wanted to refute it. But I feared that he would order that I be killed. I did not fear death but I feared that at the time when my soul leaves me, showing off before the people [that I am dying because I was prepared to speak out against the leader] will come into my heart. I therefore abstained [from refuting what he said].”

This is the hypocrisy which is the opposite of the reality of *îmân*, its genuineness, its perfection and its purity. This does not refer to the hypocrisy that is the opposite of essential *îmân*. Hypocrisy is of two types: (1) One that removes a person from Islam, attaches him to the unbelievers and includes him among those who will remain in the Hell-fire forever. (2) One that takes a person to the Hell-fire for a certain time or lowers him from the ranks of the *‘illîyyîn* (those in the high stages of Paradise) or drops him from the rank of the *siddîqîn* (the rank that is below that of the Prophets and Messengers).

ON THE PROHIBITION OF BACK-BITING AND SLANDER

Allâh ﷻ explicitly states the disapproval of back-biting in the Qur'ân and likens the back-biter to a person who eats the flesh of a dead person. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا، أَيُّبُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا، فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ

“nor backbite one another. Would any one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother who is dead? You abhor it.” (Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 12)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The following is prohibited to every Muslim as regards his fellow Muslim: his blood, his wealth, his honour.”

Back-biting is included under “his honour”. As for the prohibition of his blood and wealth, this is mentioned by Allâh ﷻ in the Qur'ân.

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not be envious of each other, do not detest each other, do not increase the price of commodities with each other in order to deceive each other, do not turn your backs from each other, and do not back-bite each other. O servants of Allâh! Remain as brothers to each other.”

Jâbir ؓ and Abû Sa'îd ؓ narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Beware of back-biting for it is worse than adultery. A person may commit adultery and repent thereafter. Allâh ﷻ may accept his repentance. As for the person who back-bites, he is not forgiven till the person forgives him.”

Anas ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the night of Mi'râj, I passed by some people who were scratching their faces with their finger nails. I asked: ‘O Jibra'îl! Who are these people?’ He replied: ‘They are the ones who back-bite and dishonour people.’”

Sulaymân ibn Jâbir رضي الله عنه said: “I came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: ‘Teach me some good with which I would benefit.’ He said: ‘Do not ever consider any good to be insignificant even if you pour water from your bucket into the utensil of a person asking for water, even if you have to meet your brother with a smiling face. And when he turns back, do not back-bite him.’”

Al-Barâ’ رضي الله عنه said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ addressed us till I could hear the chicks in their nests. He said: ‘O assembly of he who believed with his tongue but not with his heart! Do not back-bite the Muslims and do not be inquisitive of their private matters. Surely he who follows the private matters of his brother, Allâh ﷻ will expose his private matters. When Allâh exposes a person’s private matters, He disgraces him even in the depths of his house.’”

It is said that Allâh ﷻ addressed Mûsâ عليه السلام saying: “The person who passes away having repented from back-biting will be the last to enter Paradise. The person who passes away having persisted in back-biting [without having repented] will be the first to enter the Hell-fire.”

Anas رضي الله عنه said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered the people to fast on a particular day and said: ‘None should open his fast till I permit him.’ So the people kept fast till when it was evening, a man would come and say: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! I remained fasting. Permit me to open my fast.’ He would permit him to open his fast. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ continued permitting people one after the other. Eventually a man came and said: ‘O Messenger of Allâh! Two young women from my family spent the day fasting. They are feeling shy to come to you. Permit them to open their fast.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ turned away from him. The man repeated the request and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ turned away from him. The man repeated the request. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘They did not fast. How could a person who spent his day eating the flesh of people have kept fasting?! Go to them and tell them that if they were fasting, they must force themselves to vomit.’ He went to them and informed them. They forced themselves to vomit. Each one of them vomited a clot of blood. The man

went back to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him. He said: ‘I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, if those clots of blood remained in their stomachs, the Hell-fire would have consumed them.’”

Another narration states that when he turned away from the man, he came back to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! They have passed away or they are on the verge of dying.” He said: “Bring them to me.” When they came to him, he asked for a large bowl. He asked one of them to vomit. She vomited pus, blood and matter till she filled the bowl. He then asked the other woman to vomit. She also vomited just like the previous woman. He then said: “These two abstained from that which Allâh ﷻ permitted them [lawful food] but ate that which Allâh ﷻ prohibited to them [the flesh of people]. One sat with the other and they began eating the flesh of people [by their back-biting].”

Anas ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ addressed us. He mentioned usury and how serious it is. He said: ‘A single dirham which a person obtains as usury is a far greater sin in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than 33 acts of adultery which a man commits. And a worse form of usury is dishonouring a Muslim.’”

As for slander, it is a despicable trait. Allâh ﷻ says:

هَمَّازٌ مِّنْأَيْ يَّمِينٍ

“The defamer who goes about slandering.” (Sûrah al-Qalam, 68: 11)

He then says:

عُتُلٌّ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زُنِيمٌ

“Cruel, and after all that, of ill-repute.” (Sûrah al-Qalam, 68: 13)

‘Abdullâh ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh* said: “The words ‘of ill-repute’ refer to an illegitimate child who does not conceal any speech.” He infers by this that every person who does not conceal speech and slanders is an

illegitimate child. He makes this inference from the words: “Cruel, and after all that, of ill-repute.” So a person of ill-repute is an illegitimate child.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ

“Destruction to every slanderer, fault-finder.” (Sûrah al-Humazah, 104: 1)

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَأَمْرَأَةٌ حَمَّالَةٌ أُخْطِبَ

“And his wife too, who carries wood.” (Sûrah al-Masad, 111: 4)

It is said that she was a slanderer and one who used to carry tales.

Allâh ﷻ says:





فَخَانَتَاهُمَا فَلَمْ يُغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا


“But then they deceived them. And so, their husbands were of no avail to them whatsoever from the wrath of Allâh.” (Sûrah at-Tahrîm, 66: 10)




It is said that the wife of Lût ﷺ used to inform the people when any guests came into the town. And that the wife of Nûh ﷺ used to go around telling people that he was a mad-man.




The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A *nammâm* (slanderer) will not enter Paradise.”



Another Hadîth states: “A *qattât* will not enter Paradise.” A *qattât* is a slanderer.

Abû Hurayrah  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “The most beloved of you in the sight of Allâh  are those who have the best character, who are humble, who are amiable and liked by others. The most detested of you in the sight of Allâh  are those who go about slandering, who cause division among brothers, who search for faults in righteous people.”





The Messenger of Allâh  asked: “Should I not inform you of the worst of you?” The Companions y replied: “Indeed.” He said: “Those who go about slandering, who cause friction between beloveds, who look for faults in righteous people.”

Abû Dharr  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who spreads a rumour about a Muslim in order to unduly disgrace him, Allâh  will disgrace him in the Hell-fire on the day of resurrection.”

Abû ad-Dardâ'  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “Whoever spreads a rumour about a person while the latter is free of it, in order to disgrace him in this world, Allâh  takes it upon Himself to disgrace him on the day of resurrection in the Hell-fire.”

Abû Hurayrah  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who testifies against a Muslim without having the right to do so has in fact prepared for himself his abode in the Hell-fire.”

It is said that one third of the punishment of the grave is on account of slander.

Ibn ‘Umar  narrates that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “When Allâh  created Paradise, He said to it: ‘Speak.’ It said: ‘The person who enters me is most fortunate.’ Allâh  said: ‘By My might and My greatness, eight types of people will not live in you: the habitual alcoholic, the person who is persistent in committing adultery, the slanderer, the cuckold, the police, the hermaphrodite, the one who severs ties of kinship, nor the person

who says: ‘Upon me is the promise of Allâh if I do not do such and such thing’, and he then does not fulfil this vow.”

Ka‘b al-Ahbâr ؓ narrates that the Banî Isrâ’îl were afflicted by a drought. They asked Mûsâ ؑ to supplicate for water several times. But they were not given water. Allâh ؑ addressed Mûsâ ؑ saying: “I am not responding to you and to those who are with you while there is a slanderer among you, who persists in slandering.” Mûsâ ؑ said: “O my Sustainer! Who is he? Give me his identity so that I could expel him from our midst.” Allâh ؑ said: “O Mûsâ! I am prohibiting you from slandering and yet I must be a slanderer [by providing his identity]?!” So they all repented together and rains were sent down to them.

It is said that a person went to meet a wise man after having travelled a distance of 700 parasangs (one parasang is about 5.5 kilometres) in order to learn seven words from him. When he came to him, he said: “I have come to you because of the knowledge which Allâh ؑ bestowed to you. Inform me about the skies and what is heavier than them, about the earth and what is wider than it, about the rock and what is harder than it, about the fire and what is hotter than it, about the frost and what is colder than it, about the ocean and what is more independent than it, and about the orphan and who is more disgraced than him?”

The wise man replied: “Accusing an innocent person is heavier than the skies. The truth is wider than the earth. A content heart is more independent than the ocean. Greed and envy are hotter than the fire. Presenting your need to a relative when you are not successful is colder than frost. The heart of an unbeliever is harder than that rock. And a slanderer, when he is exposed, is more disgraced than an orphan.”

A poet rightly said:

من نَمَّ في الناس لم يؤمن عقاره - على الصديق ولم يؤمن أفاعيه
كالسيل بالليل لا يدري به أحد - من أين جاء ولا من أين يأتيه
الويل للعهد كيف ينقضه - والويل للودّ منه كيف ينعيه

“The person who is a slanderer among people, then even his friend is not safe from his scorpions and his adders. He is like flood water that comes at night. No one knows where it came from and where it is going to take him. O sorrow to the promise – see how he breaks it! O sorrow to love – see how he deplores it!”

Another poet said:

يسعى عليك كما يسعى إليك فلا – تأمن غوائل ذي وجهين كياد

“He will labour against you just as he labours for you. You should therefore never feel safe from the dangers of the two-faced, scheming person.”

ON THE ENMITY OF SATAN

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are two groups in the heart. One group is that of angels instilling good and testifying to the truth. Whoever experiences this should know that it is from Allâh ﷻ. He should therefore praise Allâh ﷻ. The other group is that of the enemy, instilling evil, rejecting the truth and stopping from good. Whoever experiences this should seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from Satan, the accursed one.” He then recited this verse:

الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ

“Satan promises you destitution and orders you to immorality.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 268)

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “There are two anxieties that revolve in the heart. One is from Allâh ﷻ and the other is from the enemy. May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on the person who stops and ponders over his anxiety: the one which is from Allâh ﷻ, he continues with it and the one which is from his enemy, he strives against it.”

Jâbir ibn ‘Ubaydah al-‘Adawî said: “I complained to al-‘Alâ’ ibn Ziyâd about the whisperings which I experience in my chest.” He said: “The similitude of that is like that of a house by which some thieves pass. If there is anything in it, they will take it away. If not, they will continue on their way and leave it.” In other words, Satan does not enter a heart that is devoid of desires. Allâh ﷻ therefore says:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ

“Those who are My servants, you have no influence over them...” (Sûrah al-Hijr, 15: 42)

So every person who follows his desires is the servant of desires and not the servant of Allâh ﷻ. It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ imposes Satan over him. Allâh ﷻ says:

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ

“Look at the one who has made his own desires his deity...” (Sûrah al-Jâthiyah, 45: 23)

This is a reference to the fact that the person whose desire is his deity and object of worship, then he is the slave of desires and not the slave of Allâh ﷻ. It is for this reason that ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âs ؓ said to the Prophet ﷺ: “O Messenger of Allâh! Satan has come as a barrier between me and my salâh and my recitation [in salâh].” He said: “That is a Satan whose name is Khatrab. When you perceive him, seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from him and spit on your left side three times.” ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âs ؓ says: “I did that and Allâh ﷻ removed this from me.”

It is said that there is a Satan by the name of al-Walhân that is appointed for the *wudû’*. So seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from him. Nothing can erase the whispering of Satan from the heart except thinking of that which is other than the whispering. This is because when the heart thinks of something, then whatever it was thinking of before that becomes non-existent. Everything apart from Allâh ﷻ and whatever is connected to Him can be affected by Satan. The remembrance of Allâh ﷻ alone can keep a person safe and he will know with certainty that Satan cannot affect him. Nothing can treat something except the opposite thereof. The opposite of all the whisperings of Satan is the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ by seeking His refuge and absolving all power and might to everyone except Allâh ﷻ. This is what is meant when you say:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

“I seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from Satan, the cursed one. There is no power to do good and no might to repulse evil except with Allâh ﷻ, the most high, the mighty.”

None can achieve this except the pious people on whom the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ is overpowering. Satan goes to them stealthily at times when they lose concentration. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ

“Those in whose hearts there is fear [of Allâh] - no sooner an impulse from Satan befalls them, they get alerted and they immediately perceive.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 201)

Allâh ﷻ says:

مِّنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ

“From the evil of the whisperer [Satan] who whispers, who withdraws.” (Sûrah an-Nâs, 114 4)

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* says with regard to the above verse: “Satan is spread out on the heart. But once the person remembers Allâh ﷻ, he withdraws and slinks away. When the person becomes negligent of Allâh ﷻ again, he spreads out on his heart again. This mutual repulsion between the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and the whispering of Satan is like that of the mutual repulsion between light and darkness, and night and day. It is because of these two mutually opposing forces that Allâh ﷻ says:

اسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَاهُمْ ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ

“Satan has gained possession of them and so he caused them to forget the remembrance of Allâh.” (Sûrah al-Mujâdilah, 58: 19)

Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Satan places his trunk on the heart of man. When he remembers Allâh ﷻ, Satan withdraws. When he forgets Allâh ﷻ, Satan swallows his heart.”

Ibn Waddâh said with regard to a Hadîth which he related: “When a man reaches the age of 40 without having repented, Satan wipes the person’s face with his hands and says: ‘This is the face of the person who will not succeed.’”

Just as desires are intermingled with the flesh and blood of man, the power of Satan is also flowing in his flesh and blood, and it encompasses the heart from all sides.

It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Satan flows in man just as blood flows in him. So constrict Satan’s pathways through hunger.” This is because hunger breaks down desires and the pathway of Satan is desires. Desires envelop the heart from all sides.

Allâh ﷻ says:

لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ثُمَّ لَا يَنَالُهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ.

“I too shall certainly lie in wait for them on Your straight path. I shall then fall upon them in front of them and behind them, and from their right and from their left.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 16-17)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Satan sat in wait for man on several paths. He also sat in wait for him on the path to Islam and said to him: ‘Are you going to embrace Islam and leave your religion and the religion of your forefathers?’ Man disobeyed him and embraced Islam. Satan then sat in wait for him on the path to emigration (*hijrah*) and said to him: ‘Are you emigrating and leaving behind your land and your sky?’ Man disobeyed him and emigrated. Satan then sat in wait for him on the path to jihâd and said to him: ‘Are you going to wage jihâd when it entails wasting your self

and your wealth? You will fight and be killed. Your wife will get married to someone else and your wealth will get distributed to others.’ Man disobeyed him and waged jihâd.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: “Whoever does that and passes away, Allâh ﷻ takes it upon Himself to admit him into Paradise.”

ON LOVE AND TAKING STOCK OF ONE'S SELF

Sufyân *rahimahullâh* said: “Love entails following the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.” Others said: “It refers to constant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.” Others said: “It refers to giving preference to the beloved.” Others said: “It refers to the dislike of remaining in this world.” All these opinions are actually references to the fruits of love. As for actual love itself, they did not discuss it.

Someone said: “Love is a meaning from the beloved, it overpowers the hearts from perceiving it, and prevents the tongues from expressing it.”

Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: “Allâh ﷻ deprived love to the person who is attached [to anything or anyone].” He said: “Every love is due to something in return [or something in exchange]. When this return [or exchange] is gone, love also disappears.”

Dhû an-Nûn *rahimahullâh* said: “Say to the one who portrays love for Allâh: ‘Beware of submitting before anyone other than Allâh.’”

Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* was asked: “Describe an ‘*ârif* and a lover [of Allâh ﷻ] to us.” He said: “As for the ‘*ârif*, if he were to speak, he will be destroyed. As for the lover, if he were to remain silent, he will be destroyed.” Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* then said the following couplets:

يا أيها السيد الكريم – حبك بين الحشا مقيم
يا رافع النوم عن جفوني – أنت بما مر بي عليم

“O You who are the Master, the most Noble. My love for You in the depths of me is perpetual. O You who removed sleep from my eyes! You are fully aware of all that transpired with me.”

One day, Râbi‘ah al-‘Adawîyyah *rahimahallâh* said: “Who will direct us to our beloved?” One of her servants said to her: “Our beloved is with us, but

the world has severed us from Him.”

Ibn al-Jalâ’ *rahimahullâh* said: “Allâh ﷻ addressed ‘Îsâ عليه السلام saying: ‘When I look at the inner self of a servant and do not find love for the world and the hereafter in it, I fill it with My love and I personally take charge of him by bringing him under My protection.’”

It is said that Samnûn spoke about love on one day. Suddenly a bird came in front of him and began pecking at the earth with its beak. It continued doing this till blood began to flow from it and it died.

Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullâh* said: “O my Allâh! You know that Paradise does not equal the wing of a mosquito in my sight in comparison to Your love which You honoured me with, with the inclination towards Your remembrance which You bestowed on me, and with the time that You gave me to ponder and reflect over Your greatness.”

As-Surî *rahimahullâh* said: “He who loves Allâh ﷻ, is living. He who inclines towards the world is confused. The foolish one spends the day and night in oblivion. While the intelligent one is constantly examining his faults.”

As for taking stock of one’s self, Allâh ﷻ commanded this as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَانظُرُوا نَفْسَ مَا كُذِّمْتُمْ لِعَدِّ

“O believers! Continue fearing Allâh and every soul should look to what it is going to send [present] for tomorrow.” (Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 18)

This is a reference to taking stock of one’s self over one’s past deeds. It is for this reason that ‘Umar عليه السلام said: “Take stock of your selves before you are taken to account. Weigh your deeds [ponder and reflect of them] before they are weighed [on the day of resurrection].”

It is related that a man came and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Advise me.” He replied: “Do you really want advice?” The man said: “Yes.” He ﷺ said:

“When you intend doing something, ponder over its consequences first. If it is good, continue with it. If it is evil, abstain from it.”

It is stated that an intelligent person should have four moments, one of which should be utilized to take stock of himself.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“Repent to Allâh, all of you together, O believers! So that you may prosper.” (Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 31)

Repentance involves looking at an action with remorse over it after completing it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I seek forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ and turn in repentance to Him 100 times a day.”

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ

“Those in whose hearts there is fear [of Allâh] - no sooner an impulse from Satan befalls them, they get alerted and they immediately perceive.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 201)

It is related that Maymûn ibn Mahrân said: “A person cannot be from among the righteous till he takes stock of himself more arduously than he takes stock of his partner. Partners take stock of each other after completing the task.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates that Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه said to her at the time of his demise: “There isn’t anyone more beloved to me than ‘Umar.” He then said to her: “What did I say?” She repeated what he said. So he said: “There isn’t anyone more honourable in my sight than ‘Umar.” Now see how he looked at his statement after he made it. He then pondered over it and changed it.

Look at the incident of Abû Talhah ؓ when a bird made him lose his concentration in his salâh. He pondered over this and gave his orchard in charity for the sake of Allâh ؓ as a remorse for his action [i.e. his preoccupation with a bird while in salâh] and in hope that he will be recompensed for what he missed [of the reward when he lost his concentration in his salâh].

Ibn Salâm *rahimahullâh* carried a bundle of firewood. Someone said to him: “O Abû Yûsuf! You have your servants in your house who would have done this for you.” He replied: “I wanted to test my soul to see whether it dislikes this work or not.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “A believer constantly stands watch over his self. He takes it to account for the sake of Allâh ؓ. The reckoning of the hereafter will be light for those who took account of themselves in this world. The reckoning on the day of resurrection will be difficult on those people who did not take account of themselves in this world.” He then explained this taking of account by saying: “Something that is attractive to a believer suddenly comes upon him. So he says: ‘By Allâh, I am attracted to you, and I need you. However, a barrier has come between me and you.’ So this is taking account before undertaking an action.” He then said: “The person then commits an excess and he thinks back to himself by saying: ‘What did you intend by this? By Allâh, I cannot excuse myself for this. By Allâh, I will never do this again, if Allâh ؓ wills.’”

Anas ibn Mâlik ؓ narrates: “One day I accompanied ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ till he entered an orchard. There was a wall between me and him. He was inside the orchard. I heard him saying: “Umar ibn al-Khattâb, the leader of the believers! Away with you, away with you. By Allâh, you will most certainly have to fear Allâh ؓ or else He will punish you.”

Allâh ؓ says:

وَلَا تُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ

“I take an oath by the soul which reproaches at evil.” (Sûrah al-Qiyâmah, 75: 2)

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said with regard to the above verse: “Everytime a believer does something, he reprimands himself by saying: ‘What did I intend by this statement? What did I intend by this eating of mine? What did I intend by this drinking of mine?’ On the other hand, a sinner continues an entire life without reprimanding himself.”

Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* said: “Allâh ﷻ shows mercy to the servant who says to his soul: ‘Did you not do such and such thing? Did you not do such and such thing?’ He then reprimands it, he then muzzles it, he then imposes the Book of Allâh ﷻ on it, and it becomes his guide. This is part of reprimanding one’s soul.”

Maymûn ibn Mahrân *rahimahullâh* said: “A righteous person is more strict in taking stock of himself than a tyrannical ruler and a covetous partner.”

Ibrâhîm ibn Tamîmî *rahimahullâh* said: “I pictured my self in Paradise, eating of its fruits, drinking from its rivers and embracing its virgin women. I then pictured my self in the Hell-fire eating of the Zaqqûm tree, drinking the pus of Hell, and being confined by its chains and shackles. I then said to my soul: ‘O my soul! What do you want?’ It replied: ‘I want to return to the world so that I may do good deeds.’ I said: ‘You are harbouring hopes. You should do good deeds.’”

Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* said: “I heard al-Hajjâj delivering a sermon. He was saying: ‘May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on a person who takes account of himself before someone else takes over the reckoning. May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on a person who holds the bridle of his deeds and looks at what he wants with it. May Allâh ﷻ show mercy to the person who looks at his scale of deeds. May Allâh ﷻ show mercy to the person who looks at the weight of his deeds.’ He continued talking in this way till he caused me to cry.”

One of the companions of al-Ahnaf ibn Qays *rahimahullâh* relates: “I used to remain in his company. Most of his salâh at night was supplication. He would come to the lamp and place his finger on it till he felt the heat of the fire. He would then say to himself: ‘O Ahnaf! What prompted you to do such an action on that particular day? What prompted you to do such an action on that particular day.?’”

ON ADULTERATING THE TRUTH WITH FALSEHOOD

Ma‘qil ibn Yasâr ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There will come a time on the people wherein the Qur’ân will become worn out in the hearts of people just as clothing becomes worn out on the bodies. Their entire being will be based on greed and nothing else. There will be no fear with it. If any of them does a good deed, he will say: ‘It will be accepted from me.’ [In other words, he is absolutely sure of it’s acceptance]. If he commits an evil, he will say: ‘I will be forgiven.’ [In other words, he is absolutely sure of forgiveness].”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ thus informs us that people will replace fear with greed. This is because of their ignorance of the warnings that are contained in the Qur’ân. Allâh ﷻ informs us of a similar trait in the Christians. Allâh ﷻ says:

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خُلْفٌ وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَأْخُذُونَ
عَرَضَ هَذَا الْأَذَى وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا.

“They were then succeeded by degenerate persons who inherited the Book and availed themselves of the material things of this lower life. They say: ‘We shall be forgiven.’” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 169)

The words “who inherited the Book” refer to their ‘ulamâ’. The words “who availed themselves of the material things of this lower life” refer to their desires of this world, irrespective of whether they were unlawful or lawful.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَلَمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٍ

“Whoever feared standing before his Sustainer, for him are two gardens.”
(Sûrah ar-Rahmân, 55: 46)

ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ

“This [is given] to him who fears standing before Me, and fears the promises of My punishment.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 14)

The Qur’ân, from its very beginning contains warnings and threats. No person ponders over this without being overcome by lengthy grief and intense fear. That is if he believes in it.

Yet you see people conveying the Qur’ân as follows: they will utter its letters from their *makhârij* (place of pronunciation) and they will debate as to whether a certain word should have *akasrah*, *dammah* or *fathah*. It is as though they are reading some poetry of the Arabs. They have no concern whatsoever in pondering over its meanings and practising on what it contains. Is there any deception in this world that is more than this?

Very close to this is the deception of certain people who have acts of obedience and disobedience as well. However, their acts of disobedience are more. Yet, they expect forgiveness. They assume that the pan of their good deeds will be heavier despite the pan of their evil deeds having more. This is the height of ignorance.

You will see a person giving in charity a few dirhams which he earned from both lawful and unlawful sources. While what he acquired from the wealth of the Muslims and from doubtful places is several times more than what he gave in charity. It is possible that what he gave in charity is actually from the wealth of the Muslims. He relies on that and thinks that devouring 1000 unlawful dirhams will be atoned by giving in charity 10 dirhams which were earned through unlawful or lawful means. He is actually like a person who places 10 dirhams in one pan of a scale and 1000 dirhams in the other pan and expects the lighter pan to outweigh the heavier pan. This is the height of his ignorance.

Then there is the person who thinks that his acts of obedience are more than his acts of disobedience. This is because he does not take account of his self and does not examine his acts of disobedience. But when he does an act of obedience, he remembers it and takes it into full consideration. He is like a person who seeks forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ with his tongue [and not with his heart] or glorifies Allâh ﷻ 100 times in a day. He then back-bites the Muslims, dishonours them, and spends the entire day in speaking that which Allâh ﷻ dislikes. He continues in this way without any limit and without counting. His sight is directed towards the number of glorifications of Allâh ﷻ he engaged in and that he sought His forgiveness 100 times while he is totally unmindful of his senseless jabber which he engaged in during the entire day. Had he recorded it, it would be similar to his glorification of Allâh ﷻ of 100 times or 1000 times. The angels that are deputed to record his deeds have recorded this while Allâh ﷻ promises him punishment for every word that he uttered. Allâh ﷻ says:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

“He does not utter a single word without there being a watcher with him, ever-ready.” (Sûrah Qâf, 50: 18)

So such a person will forever ponder over the virtues of the glorifications of Allâh ﷻ and expressions of His oneness, but he will not even bother to look at the punishments that are in store for those who back-bite, who speak lies, who slander, and who are hypocrites – who express with their tongues that which they do not conceal in their heart, and various other crimes of the tongue. All this is nothing but deception.

I take an oath that if the angels who are deputed to record his deeds were to ask him for a wage for recording his senseless jabber which is in excess of his glorification of Allâh ﷻ, he would certainly curtail his tongue even from uttering a single statement that was important, and he would not allow his tongue to utter anything that was useless. He would ponder over it, take account of it and weigh it against his glorifications of Allâh ﷻ so that the payment for recording it is not more than that.

It is astonishing that a person will take stock of himself and will be cautious out of fear of losing some money which he would have to pay as a wage for the recording of his deeds. Yet, he is not cautious out of fear of losing the highest level of Paradise and all its bounties! This is nothing but a great calamity for he who ponders over it.

We thus delved in a matter which, if we doubted it, we would be among the rejecting unbelievers. And if we believed it, we would be among the foolish and deceived ones. These are not the actions of the person who believes in all that is in the Qur'ân. We turn to Allâh ﷻ and clear ourselves from being from among those who are unbelievers. Glory be to Allâh ﷻ who enabled us to become cautious and be convinced after this explanation.

ON THE VIRTUE OF OFFERING SALÂH IN CONGREGATION

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The salâh offered in congregation is superior to a salâh that is offered individually by 27 ranks.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw some people missing for some salâhs. So he said: “I intended asking a person to lead the people in salâh so that I may go to those people who are remaining behind from offering salâh [in congregation] and I may burn their houses together with them.”


Another narration states: “So that I may go to those people who are remaining behind from offering salâh [in congregation] and I order that they are burnt with their houses with bundles of firewood. If any of them learnt that he would receive a large bone or two hooves of a goat he would certainly attend it.” That is, the *‘ishâ salâh*.

‘Uthmân ؓ narrates: “He who offers the *‘ishâ salâh* with congregation is as if he spent half the night in worship. He who offers the *fajr salâh* with congregation is as if he spent the entire night in worship.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who offers the salâh with congregation is as though he filled his ocean with worship.”

Sa‘îd ibn al-Musayyib *rahimahullâh* said: “For the last 30 years, *nomu’adhdhin* called out the *adhân* without my being in the masjid.” [In other words, he was always in the masjid before the *adhân* could be called].



Muhammad ibn Wâsi‘ *rahimahullâh* said: “I only desire three things from this world: (1) A brother who corrects me when I waver. (2) Just sufficient food that is provided to me without any toiling. (3) Offering salâh in congregation wherein whatever I forget therein is not recorded and wherein its merits are recorded for me.”


It is related that Abû ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâh  once led some people in salâh. When he completed the salâh, he turned around and said: “Satan continued whispering into me to such an extent that I began thinking that I enjoy superiority over others. I will not be an imâm in salâh anymore.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “Do not offer salâh behind a person who does not consult the ‘ulamâ’.”


An-Nakha‘î *rahimahullâh* said: “The similitude of a person who leads people in salâh without knowledge is like that of a person who weighs water in the sea. He cannot differentiate what is more from what is less.”

Hâtim al-Asamm *rahimahullâh* said: “I missed one salâh with congregation. Abû Is-hâq al-Bukhârî alone came to console me. Had a child of mine passed away, over 10 000 people would have come to console me. This is because a calamity in Islam is more insignificant in the eyes of people than a calamity of this world.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs  said: “He who hears the call to salâh and does not respond to it [by attending the congregation] does not desire any good and no good is desired for him [by Allâh ].”

Abû Hurayrah  said: “For a person’s ears to be filled with melted lead is better for him than for him to hear the call to salâh and yet he does not respond to it [by attending the congregation].”

It is related that Maymûn ibn Mahrân *rahimahullâh* went to the masjid. Someone said to him that the people have already gone back. So he said: “To Allâh we belong and to Him is our return. The virtue of this salâh is more beloved to me than governance of Iraq.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who offers 40 days of salâh in congregation without missing the *takbîratul ihrâm* (the first *takbîr* that is said at the commencement of salâh), then two emancipations are recorded in his favour: emancipation from hypocrisy and emancipation from the Hell-fire.”

It is said that when it is the day of resurrection, some people will be resurrected with their faces like brilliant pearls. The angels will ask them: “What were your deeds?” They will reply: “When we used to hear the call to salâh, we would get up to purify ourselves and we would not occupy ourselves in anything else.” Then another group will be resurrected whose faces will be like the full moon. After being questioned, they will say: “We used to perform ablution before the time.” Then another group will be resurrected whose faces will be like the sun. They will say: “We used to hear the call to salâh while we were in the masjid.” [In other words, they used to make preparations for the salâh long in advance].

It is related that the pious personalities of the past used to mourn for three days if they missed the *takbîratul ûlâ* (the first *takbîr* that is said at the commencement of salâh) and for seven days if they missed the congregational salâh.

ON THE VIRTUE OF THE NIGHT SALÂH

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلُثَيِ اللَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ
وَأُكُلَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ

“Surely your Sustainer knows that you remain standing almost two-thirds of the night, half the night, a third of the night and so does a group of people with you.” (Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 20)

إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلاً

“Surely waking up at night has the strongest impression and the word comes out most upright.” (Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 6)

تَتَجَاوَىٰ جُنُوبَهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ

“Their sides remain away from their sleeping places.” (Sûrah as-Sajdah, 32: 16)

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ

“Can he who is engaged in worship in the hours of the night, prostrating and standing [before Allâh], fearing the hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Sustainer [be compared to an unbeliever]?” (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 9)

وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا

“Who spend their night before their Sustainer, prostrating and standing.” (Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 64)

“Seek help through patience and salâh.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 45)

It is said that it refers to standing up for salâh at night. Help is sought through patience in order to strive and endeavour against the self.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Satan ties three knots on the back of the neck of a person when he sleeps. At the place of each knot, he says: ‘You have a long night, so continue sleeping.’ If he wakes up and remembers Allâh ﷻ, one knot becomes untied. If he performs ablution, another knot becomes untied. If he offers salâh, the other knot becomes untied. He thus spends the morning fresh, energetic and in a good mood. If not, he gets up in a bad mood, feeling lethargic.”

It is stated that someone mentioned to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ of a person who sleeps the entire night till the next morning. So he said: “That is a person in whose ears Satan urinated.”

It is stated that Satan has a sniff, a lick and scattering of dust. When he sniffs at a person, his character becomes evil. When he licks him, he causes the person to become vulgar. When he scatters dust on him, he sleeps the entire night till the next morning.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Two rak‘ats of salâh which a person offers in the dark of the night is better for him than the world and all that it contains. Were it not for my fear of causing difficulty to my *ummah*, I would have made it compulsory on them.”

Jâbir رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is a certain time in the night wherein if a Muslim asks Allâh ﷻ for any good, He most certainly gives it to him.” Another narration states: “Wherein he asks Allâh ﷻ for the good of this world and the hereafter. This continues throughout the night.”

Al-Mughîrah ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to remain standing till his feet became swollen. He was asked: “Has Allâh ﷻ not forgiven you all your past and future sins?” He replied: “Should I not be a grateful servant?”

It becomes clear from this that this is an allusion to increase in rank. This is because gratefulness is a cause for receiving more. Allâh ﷻ says:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

“If you are grateful, I will give you more.” (Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 7)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Abû Hurayrah! Do you want the mercy of Allâh ﷻ to be on you while you are alive, when you are dead, when you are in the grave and when you are resurrected? Get up at night and offer salâh with the intention of desiring the pleasure of your Sustainer. O Abû Hurayrah! Offer salâh in the depths of your house and the light of your house will be seen in the heavens just as the light of the stars are seen by the inhabitants of earth.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be particular with getting up to offer salâh at night for it was the habit of the righteous people before you. Surely offering salâh at night is a means of proximity to Allâh ﷻ, it is an atonement for sins, it repulses ailments from the body, and it is a prevention from sinning.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No person has salâh to be offered at night and then sleep overpowers him without the reward for his salâh being recorded for him and his sleep is a charity in his favour.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to Abû Dharr رضي الله عنه: “If you decide to embark on a journey, you will make preparations for it.” He replied: “Yes.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Then what about for the journey to the hereafter? O Abû Dharr! Should I not inform you of what will benefit you on that day?” He replied: “Indeed. May my parents be sacrificed for you.”

He said: “Keep fast on an extremely hot day in preparation for the day of resurrection. Offer two rak‘ats of salâh in the darkness of the night in preparation for the solitude of the graves. Perform a pilgrimage to help you in other serious matters of the hereafter. Give charity to a poor person, or say a good word, or remain silent from saying an evil word.”

It is related that there was a man in the time of the Prophet ﷺ who, when the people would resort to their beds and the eyes fell asleep, he would get up to offer salâh, recite the Qur’ân, and he would say: “O my Sustainer! Save me from the Hell-fire.” This was related to the Prophet ﷺ. He said: “When that happens again, you must call me. So the Prophet ﷺ went there and listened to what the man was saying. The next morning, the Prophet ﷺ said to him: “O such and such person! Why did you not ask Allâh ﷻ for Paradise?” He replied: “O Messenger of Allâh ﷺ! I am not of that place; my deeds will not reach there.” Soon thereafter, Jibra’îl ﷺ descended and said: “Inform that person that Allâh ﷻ saved him from the Hell-fire and admitted him into Paradise.”

It is related that Jibra’îl ﷺ said to the Prophet ﷺ: “What an excellent man Ibn ‘Umar is, if only he offered salâh at night!” The Prophet ﷺ informed him of this. He was always regular in offering it after this. Nâfi‘ *rahimahullâh* [who was the servant of Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ] said: “He would continue offering salâh at night and then ask: ‘O Nâfi‘! Is it the time of *suhûr* (predawn)?’ I would reply: ‘No.’ He would stand up and continue offering salâh. He would then ask: “O Nâfi‘! Is it the time of *suhûr*?’ I would reply: “Yes.” He would sit down and occupy himself in seeking forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ till the break of dawn.

‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ﷺ said: “Yahyâ ibn Zakarîyyâ ﷺ ate barley bread at night till he was satiated. He thus slept away and did not wake up for his night worship till the next morning. Allâh ﷻ addressed him saying: ‘O Yahyâ! Did you find a house better than My house? Did you find protection better than My protection? By My might and My honour, O Yahyâ! If you were to merely peek at al-Firdaus (the highest stage of Paradise), all the fat

in your body would melt, and you would die out of yearning for it. If you were to merely peek at Hell, all the fat in your body would melt, you would cry with pus after having cried with tears, and you would wear leather after having worn garments of fabric.”

Someone said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ : “A certain person offers salâh at night but the next morning he goes around stealing.” He replied: “His night salâh will eventually stop him from doing that.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on a man who gets up at night, offers salâh and then gets his wife up who also offers salâh. If she does not get up, he sprinkles water on her face.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on a woman who gets up at night, offers salâh and then gets her husband up who also offers salâh. If he does not get up, she sprinkles water on his face.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The man who gets up at night and gets his wife up as well, and they both offer two rak‘ats of salâh, then they are recorded among those males and females who engage in the abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The most superior salâh after the compulsory salâhs is the salâh that is offered at night.”

It is said that Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* used to quote these two couplets a lot:

اغتنم في الفراغ فضل ركوع - فعسى أن يكون موتك بغتة
كم صحيح رأيت من غير سقم - خرجت نفسه الصحيحة فلتة

“In your spare time, take the opportunity of making an *extrarukû‘*. It is possible that your death will come all of a sudden. How many a healthy person I saw, having no illness whatsoever, yet his healthy soul came out all of a sudden.”

ON THE PUNISHMENT OF WORLDLY ‘ULAMÂ’

By “worldly ‘ulamâ’” we are referring to the ‘ulamâ’ of evil whose objective in knowledge is to enjoy the luxuries of the world and to reach positions of fame and high rank.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The person to receive the severest punishment on the day of resurrection is an ‘âlim whom Allâh ﷻ did not enable to benefit from his knowledge.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person cannot be an ‘âlim till he practises on his knowledge.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Knowledge is of two types: (1) Knowledge that is on the tongue. That is Allâh’s evidence against His creation. (2) Knowledge that is in the heart. That is beneficial knowledge.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Towards the end of time there will be ignorant worshippers and immoral ‘ulamâ’.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not acquire knowledge in order to dispute with the ‘ulamâ’, to boast before the ignorant ones, and to attract the attention of people towards yourself. Whoever does that, he is in the Hell-fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who conceals knowledge that is with him, Allâh ﷻ will bridle him with a bridle of fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I fear a non-Dajjâl for you more than I fear Dajjâl.” He was asked: “And what is that?” He replied: “Leaders who lead astray.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who increases in knowledge without increasing in guidance, only goes further away from Allâh ﷻ.”

‘Îsâ عليه السلام said: “For how long are you going to describe the road to those travelling by night while you continue standing with those who are at a loss.”

The above Traditions and others portray the extreme danger of knowledge. The ‘âlim is either presented for eternal destruction or eternal bliss. By delving into knowledge, he has deprived himself of peace if he does not attain bliss.

‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “The thing which I fear most on this *ummah* is a knowledgeable hypocrite.” He was asked: “How can a hypocrite be knowledgeable?” He replied: “His tongue is knowledgeable while his heart and deeds are ignorant.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “Do not be among those who accumulate the knowledge of the ‘ulamâ’ and the sayings of the wise while his deeds are like those of the ignorant ones.”

A person said to Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه: “I want to acquire knowledge but I fear losing it.” He replied: “Abstaining from knowledge is a sufficient way of losing it.”

Ibrâhîm ibn ‘Uyaynah *rahimahullâh* was asked: “Which person will regret the longest?” He replied: “As for in this immediate world, it is that person who does good to the person who does not thank him. As for at the time of death, an ‘âlim who committed excesses.”

Al-Khalîl ibn Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said: “People are of four types: (1) A person who knows and he knows that he knows. That is an ‘âlim, so follow him. (2) A person who knows but he does not know that he knows. Such a person is asleep, so wake him up. (3) A person who does not know and knows that he does not know. That is a person who is seeking guidance, so guide him. (4) A person who does not know and does not know that he does not know. That is an ignorant person, so discard him.”

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said: “Knowledge calls out through deeds. If a person responds therewith, well and good. If not, knowledge departs.”

Ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh* said: “A person continues being an ‘*âlim*’ as long as he seeks knowledge. Once he thinks that he now has [sufficient] knowledge, he is most certainly an ignorant person.”

Al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyâd *rahimahullâh* said: “I feel sorry for three types of people: (1) an honourable person of a nation who is disgraced, (2) a wealthy person of a nation who becomes poor, (3) an ‘*âlim*’ with whom the world plays.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “The punishment of the ‘*ulamâ*’ is the death of the heart. The death of the heart occurs by seeking the world through deeds of the hereafter [i.e. using the religion for worldly motives].”

A poet said:

عجبت لمبتاع الضلالة بالهدى — ومن يشتري دنياه بالدين أعجب
وأعجب من هذين من باع دينه — بدنيا سواه فهو من ذين أعجب

“I am astonished by a person who purchases deviation for guidance. The person who purchases the world with religion is more astonishing. And more astonishing than these two is the person sells his religion for the world. He is more astonishing than these two.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The ‘*âlim*’ will be meted out such a severe punishment that the inmates of the Hell-fire will walk around him to see the severity of his punishment.” The ‘*âlim*’ that is referred to here is the one who is a flagrant sinner.

Usâmah ibn Zayd ؓ narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: “An ‘*âlim*’ will be brought on the day of resurrection and flung into the Hell-fire. His intestines will fall off and he will be made to go round and round just as a donkey goes around a grinding-stone. The inmates of the Hell-fire will gather around him and ask: ‘What happened to you?’ He will

reply: ‘I used to command good but I myself did not do it. I used to prohibit evil while I myself used to commit it.’”

The punishment of an *‘âlim* will be multiplied for his acts of disobedience because he disobeyed with knowledge. It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ

“Surely the hypocrites are in the lowest stage of Hell.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 145)

This is because they rejected after having knowledge. Allâh ﷻ labelled the Jews as being worse than the Christians although the former did not ascribe a son to Allâh ﷻ and they do not believe in the trinity. However, they rejected despite having recognition. Allâh ﷻ says:

يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ

“they recognize him as they recognize their sons...” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 146)

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ

“then when there came to them that which they had already recognised, they rejected it. So Allah’s curse is on the rejectors.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 89)

Allâh ﷻ said with regard to Bal‘am ibn Bâ‘ûrâ’:

وَأْتَلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آمَنَّا بِهِ فَأَنسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبِعَهُ

الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْعَاوِينَ

“Relate to them the condition of the person to whom We had given Our verses, but he cast them off. Satan then pursued him and he thus became of

those who have strayed.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 175)

Allâh ﷻ eventually said about him: “His state, therefore, is like that of the dog: if you bear upon him, he pants with his tongue lolling. If you leave him alone, he [still] pants with his tongue lolling.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 176)

Similar is the case with an *‘âlim* who is a flagrant sinner. Bal‘am was given the Book of Allâh ﷻ but he succumbed to his lust and desires. He was therefore likened to a dog. In other words, irrespective of whether he is given wisdom or not, he still pants for the desires and lusts of the world.

‘Îsâ ﷺ said: “The similitude of evil *‘ulamâ*’ is like that of a rock that falls on the mouth of a spring. It neither drinks the water nor does it let the water to flow to the plants [which could benefit from the water].”

ON THE VIRTUE OF GOOD CHARACTER

Allâh ﷻ said to His Prophet and His beloved, praising him and expressing His bounty on him:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

“You have been created on a sublime standard of character.” (Sûrah al-Qalam, 68: 4)

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “The character of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the Qur’ân.”

A man asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about good character. So he recited this verse:

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

“Accustom yourself to pardon, enjoin the doing of what is good, and stay aloof from the ignorant ones.” (Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 199)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: “Good character means that you maintain ties of kinship with one who severs you, you give to the one who deprives you, and you pardon the one who wrongs you.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I have been sent to perfect noble characteristics.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The heaviest thing that will be placed on the scale on the day of resurrection is the fear of Allâh ﷻ and good character.”

A man approached the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ from the front and asked him: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is religion?” He replied: “Good character.” He then approached him from the right and asked him: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is religion?” He replied: “Good character.” He then approached him from the left and asked him: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is religion?” He replied: “Good character.” He then approached him from behind him and asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is good character?” He turned towards him and said: “Don’t you understand, it means that you should not become angry.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! What is misfortune?” He replied: “Bad character.”

A man said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: “O Messenger of Allâh! Advise me.” He replied: “Fear Allâh wherever you may be.” The man said: “Give me more advice.” He replied: “Follow an evil deed with a good deed. The latter will wipe out the former.” The man said: “Give me more advice.” He replied: “Interact with people with good character.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “What deeds are the most superior?” He replied: “Good character.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ did not make good any person’s character, while He created him, and yet made him taste the Hell-fire.”

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was informed that a certain woman keeps fast by day and spends the night in worship, but she is of evil character. She hurts her neighbours with her tongue.” He said: “There is no good in her. She is from the inmates of Hell.”

Abû ad-Dardâ’ ؓ narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: “The first things to be placed on the scale are good character and generosity. When Allâh ﷻ created îmân, it said: ‘O Allâh! Strengthen me.’ So He strengthened it with good character and generosity. When Allâh ﷻ created

unbelief, it said: ‘O Allâh! Strengthen me.’ So He strengthened it with miserliness and evil character.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ personally selected this religion for Himself. Nothing is worthy for this religion of yours except generosity and good character. So adorn your religion with these two.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Good character is the greatest character of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Which believers are the most superior in î mân?” He replied: “Those of them who have the best character.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “You will never be able to lead people with your wealth. So lead them with a happy countenance and good character.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Evil character spoils good deeds just as vinegar spoils honey.”

Jarîr ibn ‘Abdillâh ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “You are a person whose appearance Allâh ﷻ made beautiful. So beautify your character as well.”

Al-Barrâ’ ibn ‘Âzib ؓ narrates: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the most beautiful in appearance and the most beautiful in character.”

Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say in his supplication: “O Allâh! As You beautified my appearance, beautify my character as well.”

‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to engage in abundant supplication. He used to say: “O Allâh! I ask You for health, well-being and good character.”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “The nobility of a believer is in his religion. His value is in his good character. His sense of honour is in his intelligence.”

Usâmah ibn Sharîk رضي الله عنه narrates: I saw some Bedouins asking the Prophet ﷺ: “What is the best thing that a person is bestowed with?” He replied: “Good character.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The most beloved of you to me and the closest to me on the day of resurrection shall be those who have the best character among you.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are three qualities which, if a person does not have, or any one of them, then do not bother about any of his deeds: (1) The fear of Allâh ﷻ which prevents him from the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ. (2) Forbearance with which he stops a foolish person. (3) Character with which he lives among the people.”

One of the supplications of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ at the beginning of his salâh was this: “O Allâh! Guide me towards best character. None but You can guide towards best character. Avert evil character from me. None but You can avert evil character from me.”

Someone was asked: “Beauty is in what?” He replied: “In courteous speech, in displaying a happy expression and in smiling.”

The person who meets people with kindness and interacts with them with good character will find that he is the one with whom they are comfortable and whose brotherhood will be praised.”

A poet said:

إذا حوت خصال الخير أجمعها - فضلا وعاملت كل الناس بالحسن

لم تعدم الخير من ذي العرش تحرزه - والشكر من خلقه في السر والعلن

“If you desire all the characteristics of goodness and you interact with all people in a good way, you will never be deprived of accumulating any good from the Master of the Throne, and you will be constantly thanked by His creation in secrecy and in public.”

ON LAUGHING, CRYING, AND CLOTHING

Some commentators say with regard to the following verse:

أَفَمِنْ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ تَعْجَبُونَ

“Are you then surprised at this discourse?” (Sûrah an-Najm, 53: 59)

In other words, this Qur’ân? Are you surprised at it by way of rejecting it and do you laugh at it by way of mocking at it, despite the fact that it is from Allâh ﷻ? Yet you do not cry out of fear and out of terror for the warnings that it contains? And you are making merry and amusing yourselves? Yet you are heedless of what it demands of you?

It is said that when this verse was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ never laughed thereafter. He would merely smile. Another narration states that the Prophet ﷺ was never seen laughing nor smiling till he departed from the world.

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ went out of the masjid one day and saw some people speaking and laughing. He stopped, greeted them and said: “Engage in the abundant remembrance of that which destroys all pleasures [i.e. death].” He then went out on another occasion and saw some people laughing. He said: “Listen! I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, if you only knew what I know, you would laugh little and cry a lot.”

When Khadir ؑ decided to part ways with Mûsâ ؑ, the latter said: “Give me some advice.” He said: “O Mûsâ! Beware of stubbornness. Do not go anywhere without any real need. Do not laugh without there being anything astonishing. Do not insult the sinners for their sins. Cry over your mistakes.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Excessive laughter kills the heart.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who laughs in his youth will cry in his old age. He who laughs in his prosperity will cry in his poverty. He who laughs in his life will cry in his death.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Recite the Qur’ân and cry. If you cannot cry then adopt the expression of a crying person.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said with regard to the following verse:

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا ۚ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“Let them, then, laugh a little and cry a lot in return for what they used to earn.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 82)

He said: “Let them laugh a little in this world and cry a lot in the hereafter.”

He also said: “I am so astonished at the person who laughs when the Hell-fire is awaiting him. I am so astonished at the person who is happy when death is awaiting him.”

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* passed by a youngster when the latter was laughing. So he said to him: “O my son! Have you crossed the *Sirât* (the bridge over Hell which every person will have to cross)?” He replied: “No.” He asked: “Has it become obvious to you that you are going to enter Paradise?” He replied: “No.” He asked: “Then what are you laughing for?” That youngster was never seen laughing after that.

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ said: “He who commits a sin while laughing will enter the Hell-fire while crying.”

Allâh ﷻ praised people for their crying. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَيَخْرُجُونَ إِلَىٰ دُفَّانٍ يَبْكُونَ

“They fall on their chins, weeping...” (Sûrah Banî Isrâ’îl/al-Isrâ’, 17: 109)

Al-Auzâ'î *rahimahullâh* said with regard to the following verse:

مَا هَذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أُحْصَاهَا

“What is it with this book that it does not leave out anything small nor big without having enumerated it?!” (Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 49)

He said: “The word ‘small’ refers to smiling, and the word ‘big’ refers to laughing.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Every eye will be crying on the day of resurrection except three eyes: (1) The eye that cried out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ. (2) The eye that lowered itself from looking at the prohibitions of Allâh ﷻ. (3) The eye that remained awake in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”

It is said that three things harden the heart: laughing without seeing anything astonishing, eating without hunger, speaking without any real need.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to wear garments that he found, be it an *izâr* (loin cloth), a shawl, a shirt, a cloak or anything else. He used to like green-coloured clothes. Most of his clothes were white in colour. He used to say: “Let the living among you wear them [white clothes] and enshroud your deceased with them.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had an outergarment made of silk brocade which he used to wear. Its green lines looked very attractive over its white colour. All his garments were raised above his ankles. His loin cloth used to be even higher – till half his calves.

He had a black shawl which he gave to someone. Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* asked him: “May my parents be sacrificed for you, what happened to that black shawl?” He replied: “I gave it to someone to wear.” She said: “I never saw anything more beautiful than your fair complexion against the blackness of that shawl.”

It was the habit of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that when he wore his clothes, he commenced with his right side. He used to make this supplication:

أَحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي كَسَانِي مَا أُوَارِي بِهِ عَوْرَتِي وَأَجْمَلُ بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ

“All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ who clothed me with which I cover my shame and with which I adorn myself among people.”

When he used to remove his clothes, he would commence with his left side. When he wore a new garment, he would give the old one to a poor person. He would say: “No Muslim clothes another Muslim with his old garment solely for the sake of Allâh ﷻ without his being under the guarantee, protection and good of Allâh ﷻ as long as that garment covers that person whether he is living or dead.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had a cloak like woollen wrap which used to be spread out for him wherever he went. It used to be folded in two and placed beneath him. He used to sleep on a straw mat with nothing except this cloak under him.

ON THE VIRTUE OF THE QUR'ÂN, THE VIRTUE OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE 'ULAMÂ'

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "He who recites the Qur'ân and then thinks that someone else has been given something better than what he has been given has in fact considered the greatness of Allâh ﷻ to be insignificant."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "There is no intercessor who is of superior rank in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the Qur'ân."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The most superior worship of my *ummah* is the recitation of the Qur'ân."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The best of you is he who studies the Qur'ân and teaches it."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The heart rusts just as steel rusts." He was asked: "What is its polish?" He replied: "The recitation of the Qur'ân and the remembrance of death."

Al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyâd *rahimahullâh* said: "The one who bears the Qur'ân is actually bearing the flag of Islam. It is therefore not appropriate for him to involve himself in amusement with those who involve themselves in amusement, nor to be neglectful with those who are neglectful, nor to become involved in frivolous activity with those who are involved in frivolous activity. All this, out of respect for the right of the Qur'ân."

He also said: "He who recites the end of Sûrah al-Hashr in the morning and passes away on that day will be stamped with the seal of martyrs. He who recites it in the evening and passes away on that night will be stamped with the seal of martyrs."

As for the virtue of knowledge and the '*ulamâ*', there are many Ahâdîth in this regard.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "He for whom Allâh ﷻ wills good, He gives him a deep understanding of religion and inspires him toward rectitude."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The '*ulamâ*' are the inheritors of the Prophets."

It is well known that there is no rank higher than that of prophet-hood. And there is no honour higher than the honour of inheriting that rank.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The most superior of people is a believer who is an '*âlim*'. When there is a need for him, he is able to benefit. Where there is no need for him, he suffices himself."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The people who are closest to the level of prophet-hood are the people of knowledge and jihâd. As for the people of knowledge, they show the people what the Messengers came with. As for the people of jihâd, they strive with their swords with that which the Messengers brought."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The death of an entire tribe is easier than the death of an '*âlim*'."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "On the day of resurrection, the ink of the '*ulamâ*' will be weighed with the blood of the martyrs."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "An '*âlim*' is never satiated with knowledge till his end is in Paradise."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The destruction of my *ummah* will be on account of two things: abandoning of knowledge and the accumulation of wealth."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be an ‘âlim, a student, one who listens [to the ‘ulamâ’], or one who loves [the ‘ulamâ’]. But do not be the fifth, i.e. one who detests [the ‘ulamâ’] or else you will be destroyed.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The misfortune of knowledge is haughtiness.”

The wise sages said: “He who seeks knowledge in order to attain leadership has in fact deprived himself of [divine] inspiration and leadership.” Allâh ﷻ says:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

“I will turn away from My signs those who are unjustly proud in the earth.”
(Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 146)

Ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* said: “He who studies the Qur’ân, his value increases. He who studies jurisprudence, his scope increases. He who studies Hadîth, his proof strengthens. He who studies accounting, his opinion becomes considerable. He who studies ambiguous language, his temperament softens. He who does not value himself, his knowledge does not benefit him.”

Al-Hasan ibn ‘Alî ؓ said: “He who frequently sits in the company of ‘ulamâ’, the knots of his tongue are freed, the bonds of his brain are untied, he is pleased with the abundance that he is experiencing in his self, he has a protection for that which he learns and a benefit for what he studies.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When Allâh ﷻ rejects a person, He withholds knowledge from him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no poverty that is worse than ignorance.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF SALÂH AND ZAKÂH

Allâh ﷻ made zakâh one of the fundamentals of Islam and mentioned it after salâh which is the highest of all deeds. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

“Establish salâh and give zakâh.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 43)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Islam is built on five pillars: bearing testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh and that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger, establishing salâh, giving zakâh...”

Allâh ﷻ issued stern warnings against those who display shortcomings in this regard. Allâh ﷻ says:

قَوْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

“Destruction to the performers of salâh who delay their salâh from the fixed times.” (Sûrah al-Mâ‘ûn, 107: 4, 5)

The above was explained at length previously.

Allâh ﷻ says:

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا
فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

“And those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in the cause of Allâh, give them glad tidings of a painful punishment.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 34)

The meaning of spending in the cause of Allâh ﷻ is taking out zakâh and giving it.

When a person intends giving his zakâh, it is preferable for him to look for righteous poor people who have turned away from the world and who have freed themselves for the business of the hereafter [i.e. who are engrossed in deeds of the hereafter]. In so doing, the person's wealth will increase.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Do not eat the food of anyone except a righteous person. And none but a righteous person should eat your food."

This is because a righteous person will strengthen himself with that food for acts of piety. You will thus be his partner in his acts of obedience by virtue of your help to him. Some '*ulamâ*' used to prefer giving their zakâh to those Sufis who were poor and did not give to anyone else. Someone said to one of them: "If you included all the poor in your act of kindness, it would be better." He replied: "No. The sole objective of these people is the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ. If poverty overcomes them, their objective will be affected. If I am able to direct the objective of just one of them solely towards Allâh ﷻ, this will be far more beloved to me than giving 1000 people whose objective is this world."

The above conversation was related to al-Junayd *rahimahullâh*. He was very pleased with it and said: "This person is one of the *auliyâ*' of Allâh ﷻ." He also said: "I have not heard a statement better than this for a very long time." It is related that this person's financial position deteriorated and he decided to give up his business. Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* sent some money to him and said: "Use it for your goods and do not give up your business. People like you are not affected by their business." This man used to sell vegetables. It was his habit not to take any money from the poor who came to buy from him.

It was the habit of Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* to give his charity to the '*ulamâ*' only. Someone said to him: "Why don't you give to others as well?" He replied: "After the rank of prophet-hood, I do not know of any rank superior to that of the rank of the '*ulamâ*'. If the heart of one of the

‘ulamâ’ becomes engrossed in his personal needs, he will not have the time for knowledge and he will not turn to studying. So to keep them free for knowledge is superior.”

A person should also give specifically to those with physical disabilities. And especially ones relatives and close family members. In so doing, a person will be giving charity and at the same time maintaining ties of kinship. There are numerous rewards in maintaining ties of kinship – as was related in that chapter.

It is also preferable to give the zakâh in secrecy so that a person may be saved from the misfortune of showing off while at the same time saving the person to whom he is giving from disgrace in the presence of others.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Charity given in secrecy extinguishes the wrath of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ related seven people who will enjoy the shade of Allâh ﷻ on a day when there will be no shade except the shade that is provided by Him. Among these seven is a person who gives charity in secrecy to the extent that even his left hand does not know what the right hand gave.

Yes, if there is any advantage in giving charity in public, then there is no harm in this. For example, if you want others to follow your example. This is on the condition that the person is free from showing off and he abstains from counting this as a favour. Allâh ﷻ says:

لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى

“Do not destroy your charity by counting your favour and causing harm.”
(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 264)

One of the misfortunes of giving in charity is counting one’s favour. A person should therefore give preference to concealing it and try to forget about it. On the other hand, if someone does good to him, it is his duty to

mention it and to express his gratitude to the person. As is mentioned in a Hadîth that a person who is not grateful to people is not grateful to Allâh ﷻ.

A poet said:

يد المعروف غنم حيث كانت - تحملها كفور أو شكور

ففي شكر الشكور لها جزاء - وعند الله ما كفر الكفور

“The hand of charity is a boon no matter where it is – whether it is carried by the ungrateful or the grateful. When it is with a grateful person, it is rewarded. It is still rewarded by Allâh ﷻ even if an ungrateful person shows ungratefulness.”

ON OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS AND THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

It is obvious that if the right of relatives and kinsfolk are emphasised, then the more special and more important relationship is that of parent and child. The importance of this right is therefore multiplied several times.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A child can never fulfil the right of his parent even if he were to find his parent enslaved and he thus purchases him and sets him free.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Obedience to parents is superior to salâh, charity, fasting, hajj, ‘umrah and jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who gets up in the morning in such a state that his parents are pleased with him, then two doors to Paradise are opened for him. He who spends the evening in such a state shall receive a similar reward as well. If he has one parent, then one door will be opened for him. This is even if they wrong him, even if they wrong him, even if they wrong him. He who gets up in the morning in such a state that his parents are displeased with him, then two doors to the Hell-fire are opened for him. He who spends the evening in such a state shall receive a similar punishment as well. If he has one parent, then one door will be opened for him. This is even if they wrong him, even if they wrong him, even if they wrong him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The fragrance of Paradise is enjoyed from a distance equal to a journey of 500 years. Yet, a person who is disobedient to his parents and a person who severs ties of kinship will not enjoy its fragrance.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be obedient to your mother, then your father, then your sister, then your brother, then those who are beneath, then those who are beneath.”

It is related that Allâh ﷻ addressed Mûsâ ﷺ saying: “O Mûsâ! He who obeys his parents and disobeys Me, I will record him as an obedient person. He who disobeys his parents and obeys Me, I will record him as a disobedient person.”

It is said that when Ya‘qûb ﷻ [the father of Yûsuf ﷻ] went to Yûsuf ﷻ, the latter did not stand up for him. Allâh ﷻ addressed him saying: “Do you think that you are too big to stand up for your father? By My might and My honour, I will not produce a Prophet from your progeny.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If a person wishes to give in charity, he should give it on behalf of his parents if they are Muslims. They will receive the reward thereof and he will receive the like thereof without any reward being decreased from either of them.”

Mâlik ibn Rabî‘ah said: While we were with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, a man from the Banû Salimah came and said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Is there any way of showing my obedience to my parents after they have passed away?” He replied: “Yes. Pray for them, seek forgiveness for them, fulfil their promises on their behalf, honour their friends, and maintain the ties of kinship that can only be maintained through them.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “From among the best ways of being dutiful is for a person to maintain ties of friendship with his father’s friends after his father passes away.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The kindness that the mother shows to the child is multiplied two times.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The supplication of the mother is most swiftly accepted.” He was asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Why is that?” He replied: “She is more merciful than the father, and the supplication of mercy does not fall short.”

A person asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! To whom should I be dutiful?” He replied: “To your parents.” He said: “I do not have parents.” He said:

“Show kindness to your children. Just as your parents have rights over you, your children also have rights over you.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on the father who helps his child to be dutiful to him.” In other words, the father does not cause the child to become disobedient on account of his own evil actions.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Treat your children equally in giving them anything.”

It is said that your child is your *rayhânah* (sweet basil) whose fragrance you constantly inhale and whose service you constantly enjoy. Then he is either your enemy or your partner.

Anas ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The child’s ‘*aqîqah*’ is made on the seventh day, he is given a name on that day and his hair is removed on that day. When he reaches the age of six, he is taught manners. When he reaches the age of nine, his bed is separated, when he reaches the age of 13, he is beaten for not offering *salâh*, when he reaches the age of 16, his father gets him married. He then takes him by the hand and tells him: ‘I taught you manners, I gave you knowledge and I got you married. I seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from your trials and tribulations in this world and from your punishment in the hereafter.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “From among the rights of the child over the father is that the latter should teach him good manners and choose a good name for him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Every male or female child is mortgaged by the ‘*aqîqah*’ that is slaughtered on its behalf on the seventh day, and its head is shaved off.”

A man came to ‘Abdullâh ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh* and complained to him about one of his children. He asked him: “Did you ever supplicate against him?” He replied: “Yes.” He said: “You are the one who caused this. It is preferable to be gentle with one’s children.”

Al-Aqra' ibn Hâbis saw the Prophet ﷺ kissing his grand son, al-Hasan ؓ. So he said to him: "I have ten children but I never kissed a single one of them." The Prophet ﷺ said to him: "The person who does not show mercy will not have mercy shown to him."

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates: One day the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked me to wash the face of Usâmah. I began washing his face while showing my dislike in doing this. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ struck me lightly on my hand, took Usâmah and washed his face. He then kissed him and said: "Allâh ﷻ has been kind to us that you do not have a sister as well. [We would have to wash her face and it would be difficult for me to do that because of her being a female]."

Al-Hasan ؓ stumbled and fell on one occasion while the Prophet ﷺ was on his pulpit. So he got down and carried him. He then recited this verse:

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ

"Surely your wealth and your children are a test." (Sûrah at-Taghâbun, 64: 15)

‘Abdullâh ibn Shaddâd ؓ narrates that while the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was leading the people in salâh, al-Husayn ؓ came in and climbed onto his neck while he was in prostration. So he remained in prostration for a long time to such an extent that the people thought that something happened. When he completed his salâh, the people said to him: "O Messenger of Allâh! You lengthened the prostration to such an extent that we thought that something happened." He said: "My son climbed onto me and I did not want to rush him till he is satisfied."

There are several points from the above incident: (1) Close proximity to Allâh ﷻ. The closest a person is to Allâh ﷻ is when he is in prostration before Him. (2) Kindness and affection to children. (3) Educating the *ummah*.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The fragrance of a child is the fragrance of Paradise.”

Yazîd ibn Mu‘âwiyah narrates: My father sent for al-Ahnaf ibn Qays. When the latter came, my father asked him: “O Abû Bahr! What do you have to say about a child?” He replied: “O leader of the believers! They are the fruits of our hearts and the pillars of our backs. While we are the subdued earth, the shade-providing sky, and through them we accomplish every major task. If they ask, give them. If they become angry, make them happy. They will give you their love and enable you to love their efforts. Do not be a heavy burden on them, or else they will cause you to become fatigued throughout your life. They will love you to die, and they will dislike being close to you.” Mu‘âwiyah ﷺ said to him: “By Allâh, O Ahnaf, when you came to me, I was filled with rage and anger against Yazîd.” When Ahnaf left, Mu‘âwiyah ﷺ was pleased with Yazîd and gave him 200 000 dirhams and 200 garments. Yazîd sent 100 000 dirhams and 100 garments to al-Ahnaf and thereby shared this gift with him.

ON THE RIGHTS OF NEIGHBOURS AND KINDNESS TO THE POOR

You should know that neighbourliness demands a certain right that is beyond that which is demanded by Islamic brotherhood. A Muslim neighbour is eligible for all that every other Muslim is eligible for, and something more than that.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Neighbours are of three kinds: he who has one right, he who has two rights, and he who has three rights. The neighbour who has three rights is the one who is a Muslim neighbour who is also one’s relative. He thus enjoys the right of being a neighbour, the right of being a Muslim and the right of being a relative. The neighbour who has two rights is the one who is a Muslim neighbour. He thus enjoys the right of being a neighbour and the right of being a Muslim. The neighbour who has one right is the one who is a polytheistic neighbour.”

Now look at how the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ established a right for a polytheist merely because he is one’s neighbour.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Be good to the one who is in your neighbourhood and you will be a [perfect] Muslim.”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Jibra’îl continued advising me with regard to the rights of the neighbour to such an extent that I thought that he will include the neighbour as one my inheritors.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who believes in Allâh ﷻ and the last day should honour his neighbour.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A person cannot be a perfect believer till his neighbour is safe from his mischief.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The first two disputants on the day of resurrection will be two neighbours.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "If you throw an object at your neighbour's dog, you have in fact caused harm to him."

It is related that a man came to Ibn Mas'ûd ؓ and said to him: "I have a neighbour who taunts me, who is abusive towards me and makes life difficult for me." Ibn Mas'ûd ؓ replied: "You may go. If he disobeys Allâh ﷻ with regard to you, you should obey Allâh ﷻ with regard to him."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: "A certain woman keeps fasting by the day and spends the night in worship. But she harms her neighbours."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "She is in the Hell-fire."

A man came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ complaining about his neighbour. The Prophet ﷺ said to him: "Exercise patience." This person came and complained about his neighbour several times. On the third or fourth occasion, the Prophet ﷺ said to him: "Take your possessions and throw them on the road." People who were passing by began asking him: "What is it with you?" Others would reply on his behalf by saying: "His neighbour is constantly taunting him." The people began saying: "May Allâh ﷻ curse his neighbour." His neighbour then came to him and said to him: "Take your possessions back inside. By Allâh, I will not taunt you again."

Az-Zuhrî *rahimahullâh* narrates that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and began complaining about his neighbour. The Prophet ﷺ ordered him to announce at the entrance of the masjid: "Listen! Forty houses constitutes your neighbours." Az-Zuhrî *rahimahullâh* said: "Forty house in this direction, forty houses in this direction, forty houses in this direction, and forty houses in this direction." He then pointed to the four directions [right, left, front and back].

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Blessing and bad luck are in a wife, one's house, and one's horse. The blessing of a wife is in her little dowry, simple marriage and good character. Her bad luck is in her high dowry, elaborate marriage and evil character. The blessing of a house is in its

sufficiency and its good neighbours. Its bad luck is in its insufficiency and evil neighbours. The blessing of a horse is in its subservience and good character. Its bad luck is in its stubbornness and bad character.”

You should know that the right of the neighbour is not confined to abstaining from harming him, but also entails bearing his harm. When a neighbour abstains from harming the other, he has not necessarily fulfilled his right. Bearing his harm is also not sufficient. Instead, kindness, causing good and doing good are also necessary. It is said that on the day of resurrection, the poor neighbour will cling to his rich neighbour and say: “O my Sustainer! Ask him why he refused to give me anything thing and why he shut his door from me.”

A person complained about having too many rats in his house. Someone suggested that he should obtain a cat. He replied: “I fear that the rats will hear the sound of the cat and escape to the neighbours houses. [If I allow that to happen], I will be liking for them something which I dislike for myself.”

Among the rights of the neighbour is that a person should commence by greeting him, he should not speak for too long with him, he should not ask him too many questions, he should visit him when he falls ill, he should console him at the time of any affliction, he should support him and remain with him consoling him, he should congratulate him on occasions of joy, he should join him in displaying his joy with him, he should overlook his mistakes, he should not peep into his house in order to look at his private affairs, he should not restrict him by planting trees along his wall, he should not pour water in such a way that it goes into his drain, he should not throw soil in his yard, he should not restrict his path to his house, he should not look at what he is carrying into his house, he should conceal his private affairs, he should be swift in enlivening his spirits when anything befalls him, he should not be neglectful in watching over his house in his absence, he should pay no heed to anything that is said against him, he should lower his gaze from looking at his wife [and other females in the house], he should not stare at his female attendant, he should be kind in speech with his children, he should guide him in matters that he is ignorant of vis-à-vis

his worldly and religious affairs. These are some of the rights for Muslims in general.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: “Do you know what the rights of the neighbour are? When he seeks your assistance, you assist him. When he asks you for help, you help him. When he asks you for a loan, you give him a loan. When he is poor, you assist him. When he falls ill, you visit him. When he passes away, you attend his funeral. When he experiences any good, you congratulate him. When any calamity befalls him, you console him. Do not build anything higher than his building whereby you would prevent air from going to him, without obtaining his permission. Do not taunt him. If you purchase any fruit, send some to him. If you do not do that, send some secretly to him. Do not let your children go out with fruit [or sweets and the like thereof which children normally eat] which would cause his children to hanker after it. Do not cause him discomfort by the aromas of your meals unless you send some to him.” He then asked: “Do you know what the rights of the neighbour are? I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, none can fulfil the rights of the neighbour except he to whom Allâh ﷻ shows His mercy.” This is related by ‘Amr ibn Shu‘ayb from his father from his grandfather from the Prophet ﷺ.

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* said: I was with ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Umar ؓ when one of his youngsters was skinning a sheep. He said to him: “O my boy! Once you have skinned the sheep, you should first send [some of the meat] to our Jewish neighbour.” He said this repeatedly. So I asked him: “How many times are you going to tell him this?” He replied: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ repeatedly advised us with regard to the neighbour to such an extent that we thought that he will include him among our inheritors.”

Hishâm *rahimahullâh* said: “Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* saw no harm in feeding a Jewish and Christian neighbour from the sacrificial animals.”

Abû Dharr ؓ narrates: My bosom friend [Muhammad] ﷺ advised me saying: “When you cook a meal, add more water to it, look at one of your neighbours’ houses and send some to them.”

ON THE PUNISHMENT FOR THE ONE WHO DRINKS WINE

Allâh ﷻ revealed three verses with regard to wine. The first verse is this:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ ط قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ
وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا.

“They ask you the injunction concerning wine and gambling. Say: ‘In both there is great sin as well as benefits for the people. But their sin is far greater than their benefits.’” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 219)

Consequently, there were those Muslims who continued drinking while others gave it up. Once, a person consumed wine and offered salâh, and made major errors in his recitation [because of his intoxicated state]. Allâh ﷻ then revealed the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ سُكَارَى

“O believers! Do not approach salâh at a time when you are intoxicated...” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 43)

Some Muslims continued drinking while others gave it up. One day, ‘Umar ﷺ drank some wine and in his intoxicated state he struck ‘Abdur Rahmân ibn ‘Auf ﷺ on his head. He then sat in one place and began wailing over those who passed away at Badr. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard about this, he came out angrily, dragging his shawl with him. He then picked up something that was in his hand and struck ‘Umar with it. The latter said: “I seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from His wrath and the wrath of His Messenger ﷺ.” Allâh ﷻ then revealed the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ
 رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ إِنَّمَا
 يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ
 وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ.

“O believers! This wine, gambling, idols, and divining arrows are all vile deeds of Satan. Continually abstain from them, then, so that you may gain salvation. Satan only seeks to breed enmity and malice among you by means of wine and gambling, and to turn you away from the remembrance of Allâh and from salâh. Will you now abstain?” (Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 90-91)

On hearing this verse, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “We abstain, we abstain.”

From among the Traditions which unanimously indicate the prohibition of wine are the following:

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The habitual drinker will not enter Paradise.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The first thing which my Sustainer prohibited me from after the worship of idols was the drinking of wine and the joking of men.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “No people gather together in order to consume an intoxicant in this world without Allâh ﷻ gathering them together in the Hell-fire. They will then turn to each other and begin blaming each other. One will say to the other: ‘O you! May Allâh ﷻ not reward you well on my behalf. You are the one who caused me to come to this place.’ The other person will say the same thing in reply.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who drinks wine in this world, Allâh ﷻ will cause him to drink the poison of serpents. The flesh of his face will fall into the container before he can even take a sip of that poison. Once he

drinks it, his flesh and skin will fall off. The inmates of Hell will suffer discomfort because of him. Listen! The one who drinks it, the one who extracts the juice [to make the wine], the one who squeezes out the juice, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, and the one who eats of its income – are all equal in its sin. Allâh ﷻ does not accept any *salâh* from them, no fast and no hajj till they repent. If they die before repenting, Allâh ﷻ makes it incumbent upon Himself to make them drink of the pus of Hell for every sip of wine which they consumed in this world. Listen! Every intoxicant is unlawful, and every wine is unlawful.”

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that he passed by a drunk person. The latter was urinating in his hand and washing his hand with his urine as though he was performing ablution. He was saying: “All praise is due to Allâh who made Islam a guiding light and water a purifier.”

In the times of *jâhilîyyah* (the pre-Islamic days of ignorance), al-‘Abbâs ibn Mirdâs was asked: “Why don’t you drink wine? It will increase the heat in your body.” He replied: “I am not going to hold my ignorance in my hand and then pour it into my stomach. I do not want to be the leader of my people in the morning and then become the foolish one among them by the evening.”

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Abstain from the mother of all evils. There was a man from the nations before you who used to engage in intense worship and remain aloof from the people. A woman became attracted to him. She sent her attendant to him inviting him to be a witness. When he arrived, the attendant began locking all the doors that he passed through. Eventually he reached a beautiful woman who was sitting with a young boy next to her and a pitcher of wine. She said: ‘I did not invite you to be a witness but so that you may kill this boy and have intercourse with me. Or, you will have to drink a glass of wine. If you refuse, I will shout out and disgrace you.’ When he realized that there was no way out for him, he said: ‘Give me a glass of wine.’ She gave him some. He then said: ‘Give me more.’ He continued drinking till he had intercourse with her and killed the boy as well. You should therefore abstain from wine. By Allâh, *îmân* and habitual

drinking can never be together in the heart of a person. A time will definitely come when either of the two will expel the other.”

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrate from Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه that he heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: “When Âdam عليه السلام was sent down to earth, the angels said: ‘O our Sustainer! Are You going to place in the earth one who makes mischief therein and sheds blood, while we continue proclaiming Your praises and remember Your pure Self?’ He said: ‘Surely I know that which you do not know.’ (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 30)

The angels said: “We are more obedient to you than the progeny of Âdam.” Allâh ﷻ said: “Bring two angels to Me and We will see what they do.” They said: “O Allâh! Take Hârût and Mârût.” They descended to earth. A flower portrayed itself before them in the form of a woman with the most beautiful complexion. They both approached her and asked her to permit them to have intercourse with her. She replied: “By Allâh, I will never accede to your request unless you utter this statement of ascribing partners with Allâh.” They said: “By Allâh, we will never ever ascribe partners with Allâh.” She then left them and returned with a child whom she was carrying. They again asked her to have intercourse with them. She replied: “By Allâh, I will never accede to your request unless you kill this child.” They said: “By Allâh, we will never kill this child.” She left them and returned with a bowl of wine. They again asked her to have intercourse with them. She replied: “By Allâh, I will never accede to your request unless you drink this wine.” They drank the wine, had intercourse with her and killed the child. When they came to their senses, the woman said: “By Allâh, you did not abstain from doing anything which you had refused to do once you became intoxicated. You may now choose the punishment of this world or of the hereafter. They both chose the punishment of this world.”

Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates: “A daughter of mine complained [of some ailment]. So I made some *nabîdh* (a type of fermented drink that is made by soaking dates in water) for her in a small clay pot. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then came angrily and asked: ‘What is this, O Umm Salamah?’ I related to him that I am treating my daughter with it. He

said: ‘Allâh ﷻ did not place a cure for my followers in that which He made unlawful to them.’”

It is related that when Allâh ﷻ made wine unlawful, He removed the benefits that it has.

ON THE MIRÂJ (ASCENSION) OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Qatâdah from Anas ibn Mâlik رضي الله عنه from Mâlik ibn Sa'sa'ah رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ related to them about the night of his ascension. He said: While I was in the Hatîm – maybe he said in the room – lying down, someone came to me and cut – I heard him saying: he cut open a slit from here till here. I asked al-Jârûd, who was sitting next to me, what does he mean by this? He said: He is referring to the area from his breast bone till below his navel. The person removed my heart. A plate of gold which was filled with î mân was then brought to me and my heart was washed in it. It was then returned to its place. A white animal which was smaller than an ass but bigger than a donkey was brought to me.” Al-Jârûd said to him: “O AbûHamzah! Is it the Burâq?” He replied: “Yes. It places its foot as far as the eye can see.” [The Prophet ﷺ said]: I was carried on it. Jibra'îl proceeded with me till he reached the lowest heaven. He asked for it to be opened. The guard asked: “Who is this?” He replied: “Jibra'îl.” He was asked: “And who is with you?” He replied: “Muhammad.” The guard asked: “Has he been summoned?” He replied: “Yes.” The guard said: “Welcome to him. What an excellent person has come!” It was then opened. When I entered, I saw Âdam عليه السلام. Jibra'îl عليه السلام said: “This is your father, Âdam. Greet him.” I greeted him. He replied to my greeting and said: “Welcome to a righteous son and a righteous Prophet.”

Jibra'îl عليه السلام then ascended with me till he reached the second heaven. He asked for it to be opened. The guard asked: “Who is this?” He replied: “Jibra'îl.” He was asked: “And who is with you?” He replied: “Muhammad.” The guard asked: “Has he been summoned?” He replied: “Yes.” The guard said: “Welcome to him. What an excellent person has come!” It was then opened. When I entered, I saw Yahyâ عليه السلام and 'Îsâ عليه السلام. They were cousins. Jibra'îl عليه السلام said: “This is Yahyâ and 'Îsâ. Greet them.” I greeted them. They replied to my greeting and said: “Welcome to a righteous brother and a righteous Prophet.”

Jibra'il عليه السلام then ascended with me till he reached the third heaven. He asked for it to be opened. The guard asked: "Who is this?" He replied: "Jibra'il." He was asked: "And who is with you?" He replied: "Muhammad." The guard asked: "Has he been summoned?" He replied: "Yes." The guard said: "Welcome to him. What an excellent person has come!" It was then opened. When I entered, I saw Yûsuf عليه السلام. Jibra'il عليه السلام said: "This is Yûsuf. Greet him." I greeted him. He replied to my greeting and said: "Welcome to a righteous brother and a righteous Prophet."

Jibra'il عليه السلام then ascended with me till he reached the fourth heaven. He asked for it to be opened. The guard asked: "Who is this?" He replied: "Jibra'il." He was asked: "And who is with you?" He replied: "Muhammad." The guard asked: "Has he been summoned?" He replied: "Yes." The guard said: "Welcome to him. What an excellent person has come!" It was then opened. When I entered, I saw Idrîs عليه السلام. Jibra'il عليه السلام said: "This is Idrîs. Greet him." I greeted him. He replied to my greeting and said: "Welcome to a righteous brother and a righteous Prophet."

Jibra'il عليه السلام then ascended with me till he reached the fifth heaven. He asked for it to be opened. The guard asked: "Who is this?" He replied: "Jibra'il." He was asked: "And who is with you?" He replied: "Muhammad." The guard asked: "Has he been summoned?" He replied: "Yes." The guard said: "Welcome to him. What an excellent person has come!" It was then opened. When I entered, I saw Hârûn عليه السلام. Jibra'il عليه السلام said: "This is Hârûn. Greet him." I greeted him. He replied to my greeting and said: "Welcome to a righteous brother and a righteous Prophet."

Jibra'il عليه السلام then ascended with me till he reached the sixth heaven. He asked for it to be opened. The guard asked: "Who is this?" He replied: "Jibra'il." He was asked: "And who is with you?" He replied: "Muhammad." The guard asked: "Has he been summoned?" He replied: "Yes." The guard said: "Welcome to him. What an excellent person has come!" It was then opened. When I entered, I saw Mûsâ عليه السلام. Jibra'il عليه السلام said: "This is Mûsâ. Greet him." I greeted him. He replied to my greeting and said: "Welcome to a righteous brother and a righteous Prophet." When I went forward, he began crying. When he was asked the reason for crying,

Mûsâ ﷺ replied: "I am crying because a youngster was appointed as a Prophet after me, yet a larger number of his followers are going to enter Paradise than my followers."

Jibra'il ﷺ then ascended with me till he reached the seventh heaven. He asked for it to be opened. The guard asked: "Who is this?" He replied: "Jibra'il." He was asked: "And who is with you?" He replied: "Muhammad." The guard asked: "Has he been summoned?" He replied: "Yes." The guard said: "Welcome to him. What an excellent person has come!" It was then opened. When I entered, I saw Ibrâhîm ﷺ. Jibra'il ﷺ said: "This is your father, Ibrâhîm. Greet him." I greeted him. He replied to my greeting and said: "Welcome to a righteous son and a righteous Prophet."

I was then raised to *Sidratul Muntahâ* (the furthest lote tree). I saw that its fruit were as large as the water vats of al-Hajar and its leaves were as huge as the ears of elephants. Jibra'il ﷺ said: "This is *Sidratul Muntahâ*." I saw four rivers, two were beneath and two were exposed. I asked: "What are these two, O Jibra'il?" He replied: "The two that are beneath are the two rivers of Paradise. The two that are exposed are the Nile and Euphrates rivers." Then the *Bayt al-Ma'mûr* was shown to me. Seventy thousand angels enter it daily. Thereafter a container of wine, one of milk and one of honey were brought to me. I took the container of milk. Jibra'il ﷺ said: "This is the natural way on which you and your *ummah* are." Thereafter, the *salâhs* were made compulsory on me: 50 *salâhs* to be performed daily. I returned and passed by Mûsâ ﷺ. He asked me: "What have you been commanded with?" I replied: "Fifty *salâhs* per day." He said: "Your followers will not be able to offer 50 *salâhs* per day. I had experience with the people before you and I had to endure very severe hardships at the hands of the Banî Isrâ'îl. Go back to your Sustainer and ask Him for a concession for your followers." I went back and He reduced ten *salâhs* from me. I returned to Mûsâ ﷺ and he said the same thing to me. I went back to Allâh ﷻ and He reduced another ten. I returned to Mûsâ ﷺ and he said the same thing to me. I went back to Allâh ﷻ and He reduced another ten. I returned to Mûsâ ﷺ and he said the same thing to me. I went back to

Allâh ﷻ and He commanded me with ten salâhs per day. I returned to Mûsâ ﷺ and he said the same thing to me. I went back to Allâh ﷻ and He commanded me with five salâhs per day. I returned to Mûsâ ﷺ and he asked me: "What have you been commanded with?" I replied: "I have been commanded with five salâhs per day." He said: "Your followers will not be able to offer five salâhs per day. I had experience with the people before you and I had to endure very severe hardships at the hands of the Banî Isrâ'îl. Go back to your Sustainer and ask Him for a concession for your followers." I said: "I constantly asked my Sustainer and now I am feeling shy to ask for any further concession. I am pleased with this and I accept it." When I continued further, a caller called out saying: "You have accepted My duty and I have made it easy for My servants."

ON THE VIRTUES OF FRIDAY

This is an auspicious day by which Allâh ﷻ made Islam auspicious and which He reserved for the Muslims. Allâh ﷻ says:

إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ

“When the call to salâh is made on Friday then hasten towards the remembrance of Allâh and cease your trading.” (Sûrah al-Jumu‘ah, 62: 9)

Preoccupation with worldly pursuits and everything else that turns one away from hastening towards the Jumu‘ah salâh are thus prohibited.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Surely Allâh ﷻ made compulsory on you the Jumu‘ah on this day and at this place of mine.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When a person leaves out three Jumu‘ahs without a valid excuse, Allâh ﷻ sets a seal on his heart.” Another narration states: “he has in fact flung Islam behind his back.”

A man went to Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ asking him about a person who passed away who was not one to attend the Jumu‘ah salâh nor the congregational salâh. He replied: “Such a person is in the Hell-fire.” This man continued coming to Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ for a month and asking him the same question. He continued giving the reply that such a person is in the Hell-fire.

It is related that the Jews and Christians were given the day of Friday. However, they differed with regard to it. They were thus turned away from it. Allâh ﷻ guided us to it, reserved it for this *ummah* and made it a day of festivity for them [Muslims]. They are therefore the first ones to adopt it while the Jews and Christians lag behind them in this regard.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: “Jibra’îl عليه السلام came to me with a luminous mirror in his palm. He said: ‘This is Jumu‘ah which your Sustainer makes incumbent on you so that it may be a day of festivity for you and for your *ummah* after you.’ I asked: ‘What is there in it for us?’ He replied: ‘In it is an hour wherein whatever good a person asks for, which was destined for him, Allâh ﷻ most certainly gives it to him. Has Allâh ﷻ not stored something far greater for him [in the hereafter]? And whatever evil, which was destined for him, he seeks refuge from, Allâh ﷻ most certainly gives him refuge from something worse than it. It is the chief of days with us [angels]. In the hereafter, we refer to it as *Yaum al-Mazîd* (the day of abundance).’ I asked: ‘And why is that?’ He replied: ‘Allâh ﷻ set aside a valley in Paradise that is more fragrant than musk. It is white in colour. When it is the day of Friday, Allâh ﷻ descends from the ‘Illîyyîn on His *kursî* (chair) and appears before all the inhabitants so that they may see His countenance.’”



The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The best day on which the sun rose was Friday. It was on that day that Âdam عليه السلام was created, it was on that day that he was admitted into Paradise, it was on that day that he was sent down to earth, it was on that day that his repentance was accepted, it was on that day that he passed away, and it is on that day that the Final Hour will commence. It is the day of abundance in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. The angels in the heavens also refer to it as such. It is the day when the inhabitants of Paradise will look at Allâh ﷻ.”

A Hadîth states that Allâh ﷻ sets free 600 000 people from the Hell-fire every Friday.



Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When Friday is spent peacefully [without any evils and sins committed], the rest of the days are spent peacefully.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hell is kindled daily before mid-day, at the time when the sun is at its zenith. You should therefore not offer *salâh*

during this time except for Friday. The entire Friday is for salâh and Hell is not kindled on that day.”

Ka‘b  said: “Allâh  gave merit to Makkah from among all places, Ramadân from among all months, Friday among all days, and Laylatul Qadr among all nights.”

It is said that the birds and insects meet each other on Friday and they say to each other: “Peace, peace. This is a meritorious day.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who passes away on the day of Friday or on the night of Friday, Allâh  records the reward of a martyr for him and protects him from the trials of the grave.”

ON THE RIGHT OF THE WIFE OVER THE HUSBAND

The rights of the wife over the husband are many. Among them are these: displaying good character with them, and bearing their offences out of mercy to them because of the deficiency in their intelligence. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

“And live with them in a good manner.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 19)

Allâh ﷻ says with regard to the magnitude of their rights:

وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا

“and those women have taken from you a firm pledge.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 21)

وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ

“and the companion by your side...” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 36)

It is said that this refers to the wife.

The last advice which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave before his departure from this world was with regard to three people. He used to speak about them to the extent that he began stuttering and his tone became soft. He used to say: “Be mindful of salâh, be mindful of salâh. Fulfil the rights of what your right hands possess [i.e. your slaves] and do not burden them with what they cannot bear. Fear Allâh, fear Allâh with regard to women. They are under your responsibility. You have taken them by virtue of the trust which Allâh ﷻ gave to you, and you made them permissible to you by virtue of the word of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The man who patiently bears the evil character of his wife, Allâh ﷻ will bestow him with a reward similar to that which He bestowed to Ayyûb عليه السلام at the time of his tribulation. The woman who patiently bears the evil character of her husband, Allâh ﷻ will bestow her with a reward similar to that which He bestowed to Âsiyah, the wife of Pharaoh.”

You should know that good character with her is not confined to abstaining from hurting her in any way, rather, it includes bearing hurt from her, and remaining forbearant during her rashness and anger. All this, a person does in emulation of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. His wives used to back answer him, and one from among them would stay aloof from him from morning till evening.

The wife of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه back answered him on one occasion. So he said to her: “Are you back answering me, O you foolish woman?!” She replied: “The wives of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ back answer him, and he is better than you.” ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “Hafsah [the daughter of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and one of the wives of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ] is destroyed and ruined if she back answers him.” He then said to Hafsah: “Do not be deceived into thinking that you can back answer the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ as the daughter of Ibn Abî Quhâfah [i.e. ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*, the daughter of Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه] does, because she is the beloved of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Even her fear is part of back answering.”

It is reported that one of the wives of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ pushed him by striking his chest. The mother of that wife rebuked and reprimanded her daughter. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Leave her. They [the other wives] do more than that.”

An argument between the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* took place. They both appointed Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه as an arbiter and asked him to present himself in order to witness the case. When he came, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*: “Will you speak

first or should I speak first?” She said: “No, you speak first and make sure that you speak the truth.” On hearing this, Abû Bakr slapped her till her mouth began bleeding. He said to her: “O you who are an enemy to your self! Does he ever speak anything but the truth?” She immediately sought protection from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and sat behind him [for protection from her father]. The Prophet ﷺ then said to him: “We did not call you for this nor did we want you to do this.”

On one occasion, ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* became angry with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ so she said to him: “And you are the one who claims to be the Prophet of Allâh!!?” On hearing this, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ merely smiled and bore this with forbearance and tolerance.

He used to tell her: “I know when you are angry and when you are pleased with me.” She asked: “And how do you know that?” He replied: “When you are pleased with me, you say: ‘No, by the Allâh of Muhammad’, and when you are angry with me, you say: ‘No, by the Allâh of Ibrâhîm.’” She said: “You are right. I do not take your name [when I am angry with you].”

It is said that the first love that took place in Islam was the love that the Prophet ﷺ had for ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*. He used to say to her: “I am to you as Abû Zara‘ was to Umm Zara‘ with the exception that I will not divorce you.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say to his other wives: “Do not hurt me with regard to ‘Â’ishah. By Allâh, no revelation comes to me when I am in bed with any of you except when I am with ‘Â’ishah.”

Anas رضي الله عنه said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the kindest of people to women and children.

Among the rights of the wife over the husband is that in addition to bearing her hurt, he should engage in pleasantries, joking and playing with her. This is something which the hearts of women enjoy. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to joke with his wives and lower himself to their level of intelligence in doing certain acts. It is related that he used to run races with ‘Â’ishah

radiyallâhu ‘anhâ. Once, she beat him and the next time he beat her. So he said to her: “This is in revenge for the last time.”

It is related in a Tradition that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the most humorous of people with his wives.

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “I heard the voices of some Abyssinian people and others who were playing on the day of ‘Âshûrâ’ [the 10th of Muharram]. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked me: ‘Would you like to see them playing?’ I replied: ‘Yes.’ He called for them and they came. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stood by the door with his shoulder leaning against it. He then stretched out his hand. I placed my chin on his hand. They began playing and I watched them. [After some time], the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked me if I had enough. I remained silent. He asked me this two or three times. He then asked: ‘O ‘Â’ishah! Have you had enough?’ I replied: ‘Yes.’ He then indicated to them and they departed.’”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The most perfect of believers in î mân is he who has the best conduct and is the kindest to his wife.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The best of you is he who is the best with his wives. And I am the best of you with my wives.”

Despite his strictness, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “It is most appropriate for a man to be like a child before his wife. But when people [outsiders] look into his character, they find him to be a real man.”

Luqmân عليه السلام said: “It is most appropriate for an intelligent person to be like a child before his wife. And when he is among people, he is found to be a real man.”

It is related that Allâh سبحانه abhors a person who is of evil character and stern. It is said that this refers to a person who is very strict with his family and proud of himself. This is one of the meanings that is given to the word ‘*utull*’ in the Qur’ân. It is said that he is a person who is sharp-tongued and hard-hearted with his wife.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to Jâbir ؓ [when the latter just got married]: “Why did you not get married to a virgin woman? You could have played with her and she with you.”

A Bedouin woman described her husband who passed away as follows: “By Allâh, he was always laughing when he entered the house, silent when he left, he would eat whatever he found [without complaining about the food], and did not inquire about what he found missing.”

Among the rights of the wife over the husband is that he should not be too lax in his joking, good conduct and agreement with her to the extent that he follows her desires to such an extent that her character becomes bad and his awe in her sight falls off completely. Instead, he should follow a balanced course in this regard. He should never abandon his awe and never shrink away when he sees any wrong. Similarly, he should never ever open the door to co-operating with her in committing evils.

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: “By Allâh, no sooner a man obeys his wife in whatever she desires, Allâh ﷻ will most definitely cast him on his face in the Hell-fire.”

‘Umar ؓ said: “Contradict women for there is blessing in contradicting them.” It is also said: “Seek their advice and then act against their advice.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The slave of his wife has perished.” The reason why he said this is that if he obeys her desires, he becomes her slave. He has thus perished because Allâh ﷻ gave him authority over her. Now that she has authority over him, the entire matter has been overturned, there is a reversal of roles and he has obeyed Satan when he said: “I will command them to alter the creation of Allâh.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 118) It is the right of the husband to be followed. Allâh ﷻ referred to men as *qawwâmîn* ‘alan nisâ’ – those who are in charge of women. Allâh ﷻ refers to the husband as the master in the following verse:

وَالْفَيَّا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَى الْبَابِ

“And they found her master at the door.” (Sûrah Yûsuf, 12: 25)

Ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* said: “There are three people, whom if you act kindly towards, they will disgrace you. If you disgrace them, they will honour you. [They are] a woman, a servant and a Nabatean.” [\[105\]](#) What he means by this is that if you solely act kindly towards them without mixing your kindness with strictness and your firmness with your softness, then this is what will happen.

ON THE RIGHT OF THE HUSBAND OVER THE WIFE

The proper opinion in this regard is that marriage is a type of slavery. The wife is thus the husband's slave. It is therefore her duty to be totally obedient to him in everything that he asks of her as regards her self provided there is no disobedience [to Allâh ﷻ] in it.

There are numerous Ahâdîth as regards the magnitude of the right of the husband over her. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Whichever woman passes away while her husband was pleased with her will enter Paradise."

A person was going on a journey. He impressed on his wife not to leave the upper floor of the house in order to come downstairs. Her father was living on the lower floor. Her father fell ill. She sent a message to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ seeking permission to go down to her father. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent a reply saying: "Obey your husband." Her father passed away. She again sought permission. He replied: "Obey your husband." Her father was then buried. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then sent a message to her informing her that Allâh ﷻ forgave her father by virtue of her obedience to her husband.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "When a woman offers her fivesalâhs, fasts in Ramadân, safeguards her chastity and obeys her husband, she will enter the Paradise of her Sustainer." In thisHadîth, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ joined obedience to the husband to the pillars of Islam.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spoke about women one day and said: "They are the ones who bear the pains of pregnancy, of child-birth, and breast-feeding. They are extremely merciful towards their children. Were it not for how they approach their husbands, those among them that offer salâh will enter Paradise."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "I peeked into the Hell-fire and saw that the majority of its inmates are women." The women asked: "Why is that, O Messenger of Allâh?" He replied: "They curse a lot and they are ungrateful to their husbands."

Another narration states: "I peeked into Paradise and saw that the least of its inhabitants were women. So I asked: 'Where are the women?' A reply was given: 'Gold and saffron kept them preoccupied.'" In other words, their engrossment with jewellery and coloured clothes.

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: "A young woman came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I am a young woman and I am receiving proposals. But I dislike marriage. What is the right of the husband over the wife?' He replied: 'If he was covered in pus from above him till his feet, and she were to lick it, she would not have fulfilled her gratitude to him.' She said: 'So I should not get married.' He replied: 'You should most certainly get married for there is much good in it.'"

Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ narrates that a woman from the Khath‘am tribe came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: "I am an unmarried woman and I would like to get married. What is the right of the husband?" He replied: "Among the rights of the husband over the wife is that if he desires to have intercourse with her even when she is sitting on a camel, she should not refuse him. Another right of his is that she should not give anything from his house without his permission. If she gives without permission, the sin will be on her while he will receive the reward for what she gave. Another right is that she should not keep an optional fast without his permission. If she does that, she will be merely staying hungry and thirsty without that fast being accepted from her. If she leaves her house without his permission, the angels curse her till she returns to his house or she repents."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "If I were to order anyone to prostrate before anyone [apart from Allâh ﷻ], I would have ordered the woman to prostrate before her husband because of the great right which he has over her."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The closest a woman is to Allâh ﷻ is when she is in the depths of her house. Her salâh in the courtyard of her house is better than her salâh in the masjid. Her salâh inside her house is better than her salâh in the courtyard of her house. Her salâh in her bedroom is better than her salâh in her house.” All this is for additional concealment.

It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The woman is an *‘aurah* (something that is always concealed). When she goes out, Satan raises his glance towards her.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The woman has ten *‘aurahs*. When she gets married, the husband covers one *‘aurah*. When she passes away, the grave covers ten *‘aurahs*.”

The rights of the husband over the wife are many. The most important of them are two: (1) safeguarding and concealment, (2) abstaining from asking for that which is beyond basic needs, and abstaining from using his earnings if they are from unlawful sources.

It was the custom of the women of the past that when the husband used to leave his house, his wife or his daughter would say to him: “Beware of unlawful earning. We can exercise patience over hunger and difficulty but we cannot exercise patience over the Hell-fire.”

A man from the past intended to go on a journey. His neighbours did not want him to go. They said to his wife: “Why are you agreeing to his going on a journey whereas he has not left any expenses for you?” She replied: “Ever since I know my husband, I know him to be one who eats and I have never known him to be one who gives sustenance. I have a Sustainer who gives sustenance. So when the eater goes away, the Sustainer remains.”

From among the duties that are incumbent on the wife is that she should not go to excesses in spending his wealth. Instead, she should save it for him.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “It is not lawful for her to feed anyone from his house except by his permission, except fresh food which she fears will get rotten. If she feeds with his permission, she will receive the same

reward as him. If she feeds without his permission, he will receive the reward while the sin will be on her.”

Among the duties that are incumbent on her parents is that they should teach her good conduct and the etiquette of living with the husband. It is related that Asmâ' bint Khârijah al-Fazârî said to her daughter when she was getting married: “You are leaving the nest in which you grew up and going to a bed that you do not know and to a partner you are not accustomed to. You should be like the earth to him [in your submission to him] and he will be the sky to you [in providing you with shelter and other needs]. You should be the resting place for him and he will be a pillar [of support] for you. You must be a slave to him and he will become your slave. Do not remain too attached to him or else he will cast you aside. Do not remain too detached from him or else he will forget you. If he comes close to you, go close to him. If he remains aloof from you, remain aloof from him. [106] Safeguard his nose, ears and eyes by ensuring that he smells nothing but a beautiful fragrance from you, that he hears nothing but good from you, and he sees nothing but beauty in you.”

A man said to his wife:

خذني العفو مني تستديمي مودتي – ولا تنطقي في سوري حين أغضب

ولا تنقريني نقرك الدف مرة – فإنك لا تدريين كيف المغيب

ولا تكثري الشكوى فتذهب بالهوى – ويأبأك قلبي والقلوب تقلب

فإني رأيت الحب في القلب والأذى – إذا اجتماعا لم يلبث الحب يذهب

“Adopt pardon from me and my love for you will remain eternal. Do not talk to me when I am overcome by anger. Do not pester me even once, as you constantly beat at a tambourine. If you do that [constantly pester me], you do not know what it would be like if I disappear [if I go away because of your constant pestering]. Do not complain excessively or else my love [for you] will disappear. My heart will refuse you, and hearts are overturned [do not think that my love for you will remain, because hearts can be changed]. I have seen that when love and hurt come together in a heart, love does not remain. It departs.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF JIHÂD

Allâh ﷻ says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ.

“The true believers are they who believe in Allâh and in His Messenger, and thereafter have no doubt; and who fight in the cause of Allâh with their wealth and their lives. It is they who are the truthful ones.” (Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 15)

An-Nu‘mân ibn Bashîr ؓ narrates: I was sitting close to the pulpit of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when a person said: “After embracing Islam, I will not be bothered about doing any good deed if I had the opportunity of merely providing water to the pilgrims.” Another person said: “After embracing Islam, I will not be bothered about doing any good deed if I had the opportunity of merely tending to the Sacred Musjid.” Another person said: “Jihâd is most certainly superior to whatever you’ll said.” ‘Umar ؓ [who was also sitting there] scolded them and said: “Do not raise your voices near the pulpit of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. It is Friday today. When the Friday salâh is over, I will go to him and ask him about what you are differing in.” Allâh ﷻ then revealed the following verse:

أَجْعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ط وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ.

“Have you made the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and the tending to the Sacred Musjid equal to the one who has conviction in Allâh, the last day, and who fought in the path of Allâh? They are not equal in the

sight of Allâh. And Allâh does not guide the wrongdoing people.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 15)

‘Abdullâh ibn Salâm رضي الله عنه narrates: We, a group of the Companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, were sitting and talking among our selves that if we knew which deeds were the most superior and most beloved in the sight of Allâh ﷻ, we would carry them out. Allâh ﷻ then revealed the following verses:

سَبِّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ. كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ
أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ. إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ
صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَرْصُورٌ.

“Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allâh. He alone is mighty, wise. O believers! Why do you say what you do not do? It is most abhorrent in the sight of Allâh that you say what you do not do. Allâh loves those who fight in His cause in ranks as if they were a solid wall.” (Sûrah as-Saff, 61: 1-4)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then recited the above verses to us.

It is related that a man asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Show me a deed that is equal to jihâd.” He replied: “I do not find any such deed.” He ﷺ then said: “When the mujâhid leaves for jihâd, can you go into your masjid, offer salâh without stopping, and keep fast without breaking it?” The man replied: “Who can do that?”

Abû Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates: “One of the Companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by a mountain pass wherein was a small pond of sweet water. He thought to himself saying: ‘It will be a good idea if I move away from the people and settle down in this mountain pass. However, I will not do this till I seek permission from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.’ He then mentioned this to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He said to him: ‘Do not do

that. Surely the rank of one of you in the cause of Allâh ﷻ is superior to his salâh in his house for 70 years. Would you not like Allâh ﷻ to forgive you and admit you into Paradise? Wage jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. He who fights in the cause of Allâh ﷻ to the extent of two milkings of a camel, [\[107\]](#) Paradise becomes incumbent on him.”

If the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not permit a senior Companion to remain aloof from people, despite his toiling in acts of worship and consuming all that is wholesome and lawful, and instead directed him to wage jihâd; how can it be permissible for us to abandon jihâd with our few acts of worship, our many sins, our consuming of things whose permissibility we do not even know about, and our corrupt devotions and intentions?!

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The similitude of a person waging jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ - and Allâh ﷻ knows best who wages jihâd in His cause – is like that of a person who is perpetually fasting, who is perpetually standing submissively, bowing and prostrating in salâh.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who is pleased with Allâh ﷻ as his Sustainer, with Islam as his religion, and with Muhammad ﷺ as his Messenger, Paradise is incumbent on him.” Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrî ؓ was astonished at hearing this. So he said: “Repeat that to me, O Messenger of Allâh!” He repeated it to him and then said: “And there is another thing as well. If he does it, Allâh ﷻ will elevate the person by 100 ranks. The distance between one rank and the other is like the distance between the heavens and the earth.” He asked: “What is that, O Messenger of Allâh?” He replied: “Waging jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”

ON THE PLOTTING OF SATAN

A man asked al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*: “O Abû Sa‘îd! Does Satan sleep?” So he smiled and said: “If he slept, we would have a rest.”

There is therefore no escape for a believer from him. Yes, the believer has the way of repulsing him and weakening his strength.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The believer fatigues his Satan just as one of you fatigues his camel on his journey.”

Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ said: “The Satan of a believer is lean and thin.”

Qays ibn al-Hajjâj *rahimahullâh* said: “My Satan said to me: ‘When I came into you, I was as huge as a camel. And now I am like a sparrow.’ I asked: ‘Why is that?’ He replied: ‘You are melting me with the remembrance of Allâh.’”

It is therefore not impossible for the people of piety to shut the doors of Satan and to protect them by remaining on their guard. I am referring to the outward doors and the obvious paths that lead to obvious sins. As for the concealed doors, these are difficult to shut. They do not even know them, whereby they could have guarded them. This is because the doors that are opened to the heart are many. Whereas the door of the angels is just one. That single door is intermingled with these numerous doors. The servant is thus like a traveller who remains in a desert which has many complex paths on a dark night. He cannot know the path except by the insightful eye and the rising of the glittering sun. The insightful eye in this context refers to the heart that is purified with piety, and the glittering sun refers to the abundant knowledge that is acquired from the Book of Allâh ﷻ and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ, by which he is guided through the complex paths. If not, the paths will remain many and complex.

‘Abdullâh ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه narrates: One day, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ drew a line for us and said: “This is the path of Allâh.” He then drew other lines to the right and left of the first line, and said: “These are all other paths. On each of them is a Satan who is calling to that path.” He then recited this verse:

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ




“This is My straight path. Follow it, then, and do not follow other paths which would deviate you from the path of Allâh.” (Sûrah al-An‘âm, 6: 153)

We gave an example of an obscure path from among the many paths of Satan. It is the path by which many ‘ulamâ’ and those servants who have control over their desires and who abstain from obvious sins are deluded. We now give an example of a clear path which is not concealed except for that person who is compelled to tread it. It is related that the Prophet ﷺ said: “There was a monk from the Banî Isrâ’îl. Satan went to a young woman and throttled her. He then instilled in the hearts of her family members that she could be treated by the monk. They took her to him but he refused to accept her. They persisted till he eventually accepted her. When she came to him for her treatment, Satan came to him and made his close proximity to her attractive to him. Satan made her more and more attractive in his eyes till the monk had intercourse with her. She thus fell pregnant. Satan whispered into his heart by saying: ‘You are going to be disgraced when her family comes to you. You should rather kill her. If they ask you about her, tell them that she passed away [from that illness].’ So he killed her and buried her. Satan went to her family and whispered into their hearts that the monk caused her to fall pregnant and that he killed her and buried her. Her family came to the monk and asked him about her. He replied: ‘She passed away.’ They then seized him in order to kill him. Satan came to him and said: ‘I am the one who throttled her. I am the one who instilled all these thoughts into the hearts of her family. You better obey me and you will be saved, and I will rescue you.’ The monk asked: ‘What do you want me to do?’ Satan said: ‘Prostrate two times before me.’ The monk prostrated two times before him.’ Satan then said: ‘I absolve myself from you.’ This is what Allâh ﷻ refers to in the Qur’ân:

كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ، فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنكَ

“Similar to the norm of Satan when he says to man: ‘Become an unbeliever.’ Once he becomes an unbeliever, he says: ‘I absolve myself from you.’” (Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 16)

It is related that Satan asked Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* thus: “What do you have to say about the One who created me as I chose. Made me do deeds as I chose. And after that, if He wills, He admits me into Paradise, and if He wills, He casts me into the Hell-fire? Has He been just in this regard or has He been unjust?” Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* pondered over what he said and then said: “If He created you as you liked, then He has been unjust to you. If He created you as He liked, then He is not questioned about what He does, and they [the creation] are questioned.” Satan then retracted till he became nothing. He then said: “O Shâfi‘î! I swear by Allâh that through this question of mine, I removed 70 000 ardent worshippers from the register of ardent worshippers and put them into the register of apostates.”

It is also related that Satan came to ‘Îsâ  and said: “Say: ‘There is none worthy of worship except Allâh.’” ‘Îsâ  replied: “It is a true statement but I will not say it under your instruction.” In other words, this is because he can cause confusion in good just as he causes confusion in evil. It is through these confusions that he destroys the ardent worshippers, the ascetics, the rich and various other people. Except those whom Allâh  safeguards.

O Allâh! Protect us from his traps till we meet You on full guidance.

ON SIMÂ‘

Al-Qâdî Abû at-Tayyib at-Tabarî *rahimahullâh* quotes from Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Mâlik *rahimahullâh*, Imâm AbûHanîfah *rahimahullâh*, Sufyân *rahimahullâh* and a group of ‘ulamâ’ such statements by which he proves that they considered *simâ‘* to be unlawful.

Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* said in the book, *Âdâb al-Qadâ’*: “Surely singing is a distraction that is disliked. It is synonymous to falsehood. The person who engages excessively in it is termed a *safîh* (a foolish person) and his testimony is not accepted [in an Islamic court].”

Al-Qâdî Abû at-Tayyib *rahimahullâh* said: “Listening to it from a woman who is not a *mahram* [\[108\]](#) to him is not permissible according to the Shâfi‘î scholars under any condition. This is irrespective of whether she is in front of him, whether she is behind a veil, whether she is a free woman or a slave woman.”

Al-Qâdî Abû at-Tayyib *rahimahullâh* said: “Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* said: ‘If a person has a singing woman and he invites people to come and listen to her, then he is termed a *safîh* (a foolish person) and his testimony is not accepted [in an Islamic court].’”






Al-Qâdî Abû at-Tayyib *rahimahullâh* said: “It is related with regard to Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* that he disliked striking with a stick [to make a musical tune]. He used to say: ‘It is the atheists who invented this in order to preoccupy people from the Qur’ân.’”

Ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh* said: “On the basis of the Traditions, it is more disliked to play backgammon than it is other games. I dislike playing chess and I dislike all other games which people play. This is because playing games is not the quality of people of religion and honour.

As for Imâm Mâlik *rahimahullâh*, he prohibited singing. He said: “If a person purchases a slave woman and discovers that she is a singer, he has

the right to return her.” This is the opinion of all people of Madînah except for Ibrâhîm ibn Sa‘d alone.

As for Imâm Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh*, he disliked singing and enumerated the listening of singing among the sins. Similar is the opinion of all the scholars of Kûfah: Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh*, Hammâd *rahimahullâh*, Ibrâhîm *rahimahullâh*, ash-Sha‘bî *rahimahullâh* and others. All the above is mentioned by al-Qâdî Abû at-Tayyib at-Tabarî *rahimahullâh*.

Abû Tâlib al-Makkî *rahimahullâh* quotes the permissibility of *simâ‘* from a group of scholars. He says the following Companions listened to *simâ‘*: ‘Abdullâh ibn Ja‘far , ‘Abdullâh ibn az-Zubayr , al-Mughîrah ibn Shu‘bah , Mu‘âwiyah  and others. He said: “Many pious predecessors from the Sahâbah y and Tâbi‘în did this.” He said: “The people of Hijâz, in Makkah, used to listen to *simâ‘* in the most auspicious days of the year – the days in which Allâh  ordered His servants to engage in His remembrance, e.g. in the days of *tashrîq* (9th-13th of Dhul Hijjah). Like the people of Makkah, the people of Madînah are also regular in listening to *simâ‘* right till our times. We saw Abû Marwân al-Qâdî reciting to the people melodies which he prepared for the Sufis.” He said: “‘Atâ’ had two slave women who used to sing and his brothers used to listen to them.” He said: “Abû al-Hasan ibn Sâlim was asked: ‘How can you disapprove of *simâ‘* when al-Junayd *rahimahullâh*, Surî as-Saqatî *rahimahullâh* and Dhû an-Nûn *rahimahullâh* used to listen?’” He said: “How can I disapprove of *simâ‘* when people better than me permitted it and used to listen to it? ‘Abdullâh ibn Ja‘far at-Tayyâr used to listen. However, I disapprove of play and amusement in *simâ‘*.”

It is related from Yahyâ ibn Mu‘âdh that he said: “There are three things that we do not find any longer. I find that they are becoming more and more rare by the day: (1) beautiful appearance while protecting one’s self, (2) beautiful speech with religiosity, (3) good brotherhood with loyalty.” I saw this quoted in exactly these words, related from al-Hâarith al-Muhâsibî *rahimahullâh*. There is evidence in this that he permitted *simâ‘* despite his asceticism, self-control, and intense efforts and endeavours in Islam.

He [Abû Tâlib al-Makkî *rahimahullâh*] said: "Ibn Mujâhid would not accept an invitation if there was no *simâ'* in it." Several people related that we were invited at a place and Abû al-Qâsim ibn Bint Manî', Abû Bakr ibn Dâ'ûd, Ibn Mujâhid and their contemporaries were present. A *simâ'* was brought. Ibn Mujâhid began urging Ibn Bint Manî' against Ibn Dâ'ûd so that the latter may listen. Ibn Dâ'ûd said: "My father related to me from Ahmad ibn Hambal*rahimahullâh* that he disliked *simâ'*. My father also disliked it. And I am following the way of my father." Abû al-Qâsim ibn Bint Manî' said: "My grandfather, Ahmad ibn Bint Manî' related to me from Sâlih ibn Ahmad that his father used to listen to the words of Ibn al-Khabbâzah." So Ibn Mujâhid said to Ibn Dâ'ûd: "Do not tell me about your father." And he said to Ibn Bint Manî': "Do not tell me about your grandfather. O Abû Bakr [ibn Dâ'ûd]! What do you have to say about a person who says a line of poetry? Is it prohibited?" Ibn Dâ'ûd replied: "No." Ibn Mujâhid asked: "If he has a beautiful voice, is it prohibited for him to sing it?" He replied: "No." Ibn Mujâhid asked: "If he sings it by shortening the long vowels and lengthening the short vowels, is it prohibited?" He replied: "If I do not have the strength to fight one Satan, how can I have the strength to fight two Satans?"

He [Abû Tâlib al-Makkî *rahimahullâh*] said: "Abû al-Hasan al-'Asqalânî al-Aswad was from among the *auliyâ'* who used to listen to *simâ'* and patronize it. He compiled a book on the subject and refuted therein those who reject it. Similarly, a group of scholars wrote books in refutation of those who reject it."

It is related that Mumshâd ad-Dînawarî *rahimahullâh* said: "I saw the Prophet ﷺ in my sleep. I asked him: 'O Messenger of Allâh! Do you dislike anything of this *simâ'*?' He replied: 'I do not dislike anything about it. However, say to them that they should commence with the recitation of the Qur'ân before it and terminate it with the recitation of the Qur'ân.'"

It is related from Tâhir ibn Bilâl al-Hamdânî al-Warrâq*rahimahullâh* who was from among the senior scholars that he said: "I was in seclusion (*i'tikâf*) at the *jâmi' musjid* of Jeddah at sea. One day, I saw a group of people in one section of the musjid saying something and others were listening to it. I disliked this from the bottom of my heart and I said to

myself: ‘These people are singing poetry in one of the houses of Allâh?!’ That night I saw the Prophet ﷺ in my sleep. He was sitting in that section of the masjid with Abû Bakr ؓ sitting next to him. Abû Bakr ؓ was then saying something. The Prophet ﷺ was listening to him and placing his hand on his heart as though he was entranced by that. So I thought to myself: ‘It was not right for me to disapprove of what those people were listening to when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is listening to something that Abû Bakr ؓ is saying.’ I then turned towards the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and he said: ‘This is the truth with truth, or, this is also from the truth. How can I doubt it?’”

Al-Junayd *rahimahullâh* said: “The mercy of Allâh ﷻ descends on this group on three occasions: (1) when they eat, because they only eat when they are really in need, (2) when they engage in discussions, because they only talk about the ranks of the *siddîqîn*, (3) when they listen to *simâ‘*, because they listen with emotion and they witness the truth.”

It is related that Ibn Jurayj *rahimahullâh* used to give concession to listening to *simâ‘*. So someone asked him: “On the day of resurrection, will this *simâ‘* be brought among your good deeds or your evil deeds?” He replied: “Neither among the good deeds nor among the evil deeds, because it is similar to foolish talk. And Allâh ﷻ says: “Allâh does not take you to task for your foolish oaths...” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 225)

These are the different opinions in this regard. Whoever seeks the truth in order to follow it, then whatever inquiries he makes in this regard, these differing opinions will come before him. He will be left at a loss or inclined to some of the opinions by his desire. All these are shortcomings. It is his duty to seek the truth through the proper channel. And that is by investigating the faculties of prohibition and permissibility.

ON THE PROHIBITION OF INNOVATION AND FOLLOWING DESIRES

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Beware of new matters. Surely every new matter is an innovation. Every innovation is a deviation. And every deviation is destined to the Hell-fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who introduces new matters in this religion of ours, it is rejected from him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Hold on firmly to my Sunnah and the way of the rightly-guided caliphs after me.”

It is gauged from these Ahâdîth that anything that contradicts the Qur’ân, the Sunnah and the consensus of the imâms is an innovation, it is rejected.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who introduces a good practice shall receive the reward thereof and the reward of whoever practises on it till the day of resurrection. He who introduces an evil practice shall receive the burden thereof and the burden of whoever practises on it till the day of resurrection.”

Qatâdah *rahimahullâh* said with regard to the following verse:


وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ

“This is My straight path. Follow it, then...” (Sûrah al-An‘âm, 6: 153)


He said: “The path is one. Its sole purpose is guidance. Its destination is Paradise. Satan introduced numerous deviated paths. Their sole purpose is deviation. Their destination is the Hell-fire.”


Ibn Mas‘ûd رضي الله عنه narrates: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ drew a line for us and said: “This is the path of Allâh.” He then drew other lines to the right and



left of the first line, and said: “These are all other paths. On each of them is a Satan who is calling to that path.” He then recited the above verse.



Ibn ‘Abbâs  said: “These different paths are different ways of deviation.”



Ibn ‘Atîyyah *rahimahullâh* said: “These different paths include the Jews, Christians, Mageans, the people of all other religions, the people of innovations and deviations: those who follow their desires, who follow isolated cases in subsidiary matters, and those who become absorbed in argumentation and delving into scholastic theology. All these are causes of going astray and are most likely to cause incorrect beliefs.”



The Messenger of Allâh  said: “He who is disinclined to my Sunnah is not of me.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “No nation introduces something new into its religion after its Prophet without it losing the like thereof from the Sunnah.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “There is no deity that is worshipped under the shade of the sky that is more severe in the sight of Allâh  than desire that is followed.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “The best speech is the Book of Allâh. The best way is the way of Muhammad . The worst of matters are those that are newly introduced. Every innovation is a deviation. I most certainly fear the desires of deviation in your stomachs and your private parts, and the deviations of desires. Beware of innovations for surely every innovation is a deviation.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Allâh  concealed repentance from every innovator till he abandons his innovation.”

The Messenger of Allâh  said: “Allâh  does not accept a fast, ahajj, an ‘umrah, jihâd, spending, and justice from an innovator. He comes out of Islam just as a strand of hair is removed from dough. I left you on an

absolutely clear path. It's night is as clear as it's day. None but a person who is bound to destruction will deviate from it. Every life has an eagerness in it. Then every eagerness experiences weariness. He whose eagerness is towards my Sunnah, he is certainly guided. He whose eagerness is towards anything else, he is certainly destroyed. I fear three things on myummah: (1) the deviation of a scholar, (2) desire that is followed, (3) an unjust ruler."

The prohibition of instruments of amusement

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The person who says to his friend: 'Come, I will take a bet with you', should give in charity."

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh*, Imâm Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "He who plays backgammon is as though he dipped his hand in the flesh and blood of a pig."

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The similitude of a person who plays backgammon and then stands up to offer salâh is like that of a person who performs ablution with vomit and the blood of a pig and then stands up to offer salâh." In other words, his salâh is not accepted, as explicitly stated by another narration.

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Yahyâ ibn Kathîr *rahimahullâh* who said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by some people who were playing backgammon, so he said: "Hearts that are distracted, hands that are doing something, and tongues that are engaged in useless talk."

Ad-Daylamî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "When you pass by these people who play with divining arrows, chess, backgammon and other games of this nature, then do not greet them. If they greet you, do not reply to their greeting."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Three things are part of gambling: (1) betting, (2) backgammon, (3) betting on racing pigeons.”

‘Alî ؓ passed by some people who were playing chess. He said: “What are these idols with which you are engrossed? It would be better for one of you to hold a burning ember in his hand till it extinguishes than to touch these [chess beads].” He then said: “By Allâh, you have been created for a purpose other than this.”

‘Alî ؓ said: “The person who plays chess speaks lies the most. A chess player will say: ‘I killed’, but he did not kill. He will say: ‘He died’, but he did not die.”

Abû Mûsâ al-Ash‘arî ؓ said: “None but a person who is in clear error plays chess.”

There are those amusements which are absolutely unlawful, e.g. musical instruments including sticks, the *tunbûr* (a long-necked stringed instrument resembling the mandolin), piano, drum, *themizmâr* (single-pipe wood-wind instrument resembling the oboe), and any other instrument which produces an enchanting sound on its own.

Then there are those instruments that are disliked. They are those that increase the pleasure when accompanied with singing but do not enchant when played on their own. These include the cymbal and the reed. These are disliked when accompanied with singing. But not disliked on their own.

Then there are those that are permitted. They are those that are not used as instruments of pleasure but as a warning, e.g. a conch or a drum to announce war or to announce a meeting. Or those that are used to make an announcement, e.g. the tambourine to announce a marriage.

ON THE VIRTUE OF RAJAB

The word “Rajab” is derived from the word “*at-tarjīb*” which means “to show respect, to honour”. It is also referred to as “*al-Asabb*” because mercy is poured down in this month on those who turn in repentance. And the light of acceptance is poured on those who practise. It is also referred to as “*al-Asamm*” (the deaf one) because no clamour of fighting is heard in it [because it is one of the sacred months in which fighting was prohibited even before Islam]. It is also said that Rajab is the name of a river in Paradise whose water is whiter than milk, sweeter than honey and colder than ice. None will drink from this river except those who kept fast in this month.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “Rajab is the month of Allāh ﷻ, Sha‘bān is my month, and Ramadān is the month of my *ummah*.”

The scholars of inference say that Rajab [in Arabic] consists of three letters: *râ*, *jîm* and *bâ’*. The *râ* represents the *rahmah* (mercy) of Allāh ﷻ. The *jîm* represents the *jurm* and *jinâyah* (crime and sin) of a person. The *bâ’* represents the *birr* (kindness) of Allāh ﷻ. It is as though Allāh ﷻ is saying that “I place the sin of a person between My mercy and My kindness.”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: “Listen! Rajab is the deaf month of Allāh ﷻ. He who fasts a single day of Rajab with faith and expecting reward, he has made the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ, the greatest, incumbent upon himself.”

It is said that Allāh ﷻ adorned the months of the year with four months: Dhul Qa‘dah, Dhul Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab. Allāh ﷻ says in the Qur’ân: “From them, four are sacred.” (Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 36) The first three of these sacred months come one after the other while the last one comes separately. The last one is Rajab.

It is related that a woman in Bayt al-Maqdis used to recite Sûrah al-Ikhlâs 12 000 times every day in the month of Rajab and she used to wear woollen clothing in this month. When she fell ill, she advised her son to bury her with her woollen clothing. When she passed away, he enshrouded her in expensive clothing. He saw her in his dream saying to him: “I am displeased with you because you did not follow my advice.” He woke up with a fright and took her woollen clothing in order to bury it with her. He dug her grave but did not find her in it. He became astonished. He then heard a voice saying: “Don’t you know that whoever obeys Us in the month of Rajab, We do not leave such a person abandoned and lonely?”



It is related that when one third of the night of the first Friday of Rajab passes, there remains no angel who does not seek forgiveness for the fasting of Rajab.

Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who keeps fast for three days of a sacred month [i.e. in any one of the above-mentioned four sacred months], Allâh ﷻ records the reward of worship for 900 years.” Anas رضي الله عنه said: “May my ears become deaf if I did not hear this from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.”

The sacred months are four. The best angels are four. The most superior of the revealed Books are four. The parts of the body that are washed in *wudû’* are four. The best form of glorification of Allâh ﷻ are four words: *subhânallâh*, *al-hamdulillâh*, *lâ ilâha illallâhu*, *Allâhu akbar*. The main units of counting are four: ones, tens, hundreds and thousands. The main times are four: hour, day, month and year. The seasons of the year are four: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The temperaments [of the human body] are four: heat, coldness, dryness and wetness. The elements of the body are four: yellow, black, blood and mucous. The rightly-guided caliphs are four: Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, ‘Uthmân رضي الله عنه and ‘Alî رضي الله عنه.

Ad-Daylamî *rahimahullâh* narrates from ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* who said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: “Allâh ﷻ pours down goodness profusely in four nights: the night of *ad-hâ* (the 10th of Dhul

Hijjah), the night of *fitr* (the 1st of Shawwâl), the 15th of Sha‘bân and the first night of Rajab.”

Ad-Daylamî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Umâmah  that the Messenger of Allâh  said: “There are five nights in which supplications are not rejected: the first night of Rajab, the 15th night of Sha‘bân, the night of Friday, and the two nights of ‘îd.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF SHA‘BÂN

It is referred to as Sha‘bân because much good emanates from it. It is derived from the word “*shi‘b*” which refers to a mountain pass. It is thus the path of goodness.

Abû Umâmah al-Bâhilî رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When Sha‘bân enters, purify yourselves and make good your intention in it.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast so much that we would say: ‘He will not stop fasting.’ He used to abstain from fasting so much that we would say: ‘He will not fast.’ And most of his fasts used to be in Sha‘bân.”

Imâm an-Nasa’î *rahimahullâh* narrates from Usâmah رضي الله عنه who said: “I asked: O Messenger of Allâh! I have not seen you fasting in other months as much as I see you fasting in Sha‘bân.” He replied: “That is a month which people are heedless of. It is between Rajab and Ramadân. It is the month in which the deeds of people are raised to the Sustainer of the worlds. I therefore love that my deeds be raised while I am fasting.”

Imâm al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate from ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* who said: “I did not see the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting a complete month except for Ramadân. And I did not see him fasting in any month as much as he kept fast in Sha‘bân.” Another narration states: “He used to fast the entire month of Sha‘bân.” Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates: “He used to keep fast for a major portion of Sha‘bân.” This narration thus explains the previous narration. The words “entire month” thus refer to a major portion of the month.

It is said that the angels in the heavens have two nights of ‘*îd*’ just as the Muslims on earth have two days of ‘*îd*’. The ‘*îd*’ of the angels is the night of Barâ’ah, which is the 15th night of Sha‘bân and the night of Qadr. The ‘*îd*’ of

the Muslims is the day of *fitr* and the day of *ad-hâ*. It is for this reason that the night of the 15th of Sha‘bân is referred to as the night of the ‘*îd* of the angels.

As-Subkî *rahimahullâh* states in his commentary that this night atones for the sins of the year. The night of Friday atones for the sins of the week. The night of Qadr atones for the sins of one’s lifetime. In other words, remaining awake in the worship of Allâh ﷻ in these nights is a cause of the atonement of sins. It is for this reason that it is also referred to as the night of atonement and the night of remaining awake.

Al-Mundhirî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who spends the two nights of ‘*îd* and the night of the 15th of Sha‘bân in worship, his heart will not die on the day when hearts will die.”

It is also referred to as the night of intercession because the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked Allâh ﷻ for the right of intercession for his *ummah* on the 13th night of Sha‘bân. Allâh ﷻ acceded to his request in favour of one third of his *ummah*. He asked Him on the 14th and Allâh ﷻ acceded to his request in favour of two thirds. He asked him on the 15th and Allâh ﷻ acceded to his request in favour of all. Except for that person who runs away like a camel. In other words, except for that person who flees from Allâh ﷻ and remains far from Him by persisting in acts of disobedience.

It is also referred to as the night of forgiveness. Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “On the night of the 15th of Sha‘bân, Allâh ﷻ looks at His servants and forgives the people of earth except two people: a polytheist or a person who bears malice [towards another].”

It is also referred to as the night of emancipation. Ibn Is-hâq *rahimahullâh* narrates from Anas ibn Mâlik ؓ who said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent me to the house of ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* for some work. I said to her: ‘Hasten because I left the Prophet ﷺ while he was talking to them [the Muslims] about the 15th night of Sha‘bân.’ She said: ‘O Anas! Sit

down so that I may relate to you something about the 15th night of Sha‘bân. That night was my turn with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He came and got under the duvet with me. During some portion of the night I got up and realized that he was not there. I thought to myself: ‘Perhaps he went to his Coptic slave-woman.’ So I went out and passed by the musjid. My leg touched him and he was saying: ‘My head and my thoughts have prostrated before You [O Allâh!]. My heart has believed in You. Here are my hands and whatever excesses I committed against myself with them. O You magnificent one, in whom hope is placed for every important matter. Forgive all major sins. My face has prostrated before the Being who created it and fashioned it. Who placed ears and eyes in it.’ He then raised his head and said: ‘O Allâh! Bless me with a heart that is fearful and pure, that is free from polytheism, that is neither disbelieving nor wretched.’ He then returned into prostration and I heard him saying: ‘I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your displeasure. I seek refuge in Your pardon from Your punishment. I seek refuge in You from You. I cannot encompass praising You. You are as You praised Yourself. I am saying as my brother Dâ’ûd [ﷺ] said: ‘I am rubbing my face in the sand for my Master. It is most worthy for a face to be rubbed for my Master.’ He then raised his head, so I said to him: ‘May my parents be sacrificed for you. You are in a valley and I am in a completely different valley. He said: ‘O Humayrâ! Do you not know that this is the 15th night of Sha‘bân? On this night, Allâh ﷻ sets free from the Hell-fire people equal to the number of hairs on the goats of the Banû Kalb tribe. However, he does not forgive six types of people: (1) a habitual alcoholic, (2) a person who is disobedient to his parents, (3) a person who is persistent in committing adultery, (4) a person who severs ties, (5) a person who plays music, (6) a person who slanders.’” Another narration mentions “a person who draws images” instead of “a person who plays music”.

It is also referred to as the night of distribution and destiny. ‘Atâ’ ibn Yasâr رحمہ اللہ narrates that when it is the night of the 15th of Sha‘bân, the angel of death copies the names of all those who will die from this Sha‘bân till the next. A person plants a tree, he gets married, and he builds a building while his name has already been recorded among those who are going to die. The angel of death is waiting to be issued the order to take his life away.

ON THE VIRTUE OF RAMADÂN

Allâh ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ

“O believers! Ordained for you is fasting as it was ordained for those before you...” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 183)

Sa‘îd ibn Jubayr ؓ said: The fast before us was from the time of ‘ishâ salâh till the next night. This was also the case in the beginning of Islam.

A group of scholars says that it was compulsory on the Christians. At times the month of fasting would be during intense heat or severe cold. This would cause difficulty for them in their journeys and some of their occupations. So a group of their senior leaders agreed that their fasting should be at a time between winter and summer. They therefore settled on the spring season for their fast. They also added 10 days to the total [of 30 days] as an atonement for the change which they made. Then one of their kings fell ill. He made a vow that if Allâh ﷻ cures him, he will add one week to their fasting. When he recovered from his illness, he added one week. When he passed away and another king followed him, the new king said: “Make it a round figure and make the fast 50 days.” Then the death of animals afflicted them. So he said: “Add to your fasts.” So they added another 10 days. It is said, and another 10 days after that.

It is said that there was no nation on which the fasting of Ramadân was not compulsory. However, they all deviated from it [by making additions and subtractions, as illustrated above].

Al-Baghawî *rahimahullâh* said: “The correct view is that Ramadân is the name of the month derived from the word “*ar-ramdâ*” which refers to hot pebbles [which become hot by the intense heat of the sun]. This is because they used to fast in intense heat. When the Arabs decided to appoint names

to the months, it so happened that the month of fasting was in intense heat. It is also said that it is referred to as Ramadân because it burns the sins.

It was made compulsory in the second year of the emigration. It is known with certainty as being a pillar of Islam. The person who rejects that it is compulsory is labelled an unbeliever.

There are numerous Ahâdîth with regard to its merits and virtues. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When it is the first night of Ramadân, all the doors of Paradise are opened. Not a single one of those doors are locked for the entire month. Allâh ﷻ commands a caller to announce: ‘O the one who is desiring good, come forward. O the one who is desiring evil, go back.’ He then says: ‘Is there anyone seeking forgiveness so that He may forgive him? Is there anyone asking, so that He may fulfil his request? Is there anyone repenting, so that He may accept his repentance?’ This continues till the break of dawn. Allâh ﷻ sets free one million people from the Hell-fire every evening at the time of opening the fast, all of whom were fully eligible for the punishment.”

Salmân al-Fârisî ؓ narrates: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ addressed us on the last day of Sha‘bân. He said: “O people! An auspicious month has dawned upon you. In it is a night that is better than a thousand months. Allâh ﷻ made the fast in this month a compulsory duty and worship at night an optional duty. He who does an optional act of good in this month is like one who fulfils a compulsory duty in other months. He who fulfils a compulsory duty in this month is like one who fulfils 70 compulsory duties in other months. It is the month of patience; and the reward for patience is Paradise. It is the month of beneficence. It is the month in which the sustenance of a believer is increased. He who provides food to a fasting person shall receive the reward of freeing a slave and it will be a source of forgiveness for his sins.” We said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Not all of us have something with which a fasting person can open his fast.” He replied: “Allâh ﷻ will give this reward even to a person who provides a drink of milk, a sip of water or a date to the fasting person. He who satiates the hunger of a fasting person, it will be a source of forgiveness for his sins, Allâh ﷻ will give him to drink from my fountain after which he will never

feel thirsty, and he will receive a reward equal to the fasting person without any reward being decreased from the latter. It is a month whose first ten days are a mercy, whose middle ten days are forgiveness, and whose last ten days are liberation from the Hell-fire. He who lessens the burden of his slave in this month, Allâh ﷻ will set him free from the Hell-fire. You should therefore engage in these four acts profusely in this month: two of these are such that you will please your Sustainer thereby, and the other two are such that you cannot do without them. As for the two by which you can please your Sustainer, they are: bearing testimony that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ, and that you seek His forgiveness. As for the other two which you cannot do without, they are: that you ask your Sustainer for Paradise and you seek refuge in Him from the Hell-fire.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who fasts in Ramadân with faith and expecting reward, his past and future sins are forgiven.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said that Allâh ﷻ says: “Every deed of man is for him, except for fasting. It is solely for Me and I will personally reward him for it.”

This is sufficient to illustrate the importance of this worship regarding which Allâh ﷻ attributed to Himself.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “My *ummah* was given five attributes in the month of Ramadân which were not given to any nation before it: (1) the change in the breath of the mouth of the fasting person is better in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the smell of musk, (2) the angels seek forgiveness for them till they open their fast, (3) the rebellious Satans are chained in this month, (4) Allâh ﷻ adorns Paradise every day and says: ‘My righteous servants are most likely to repulse sin and evil from themselves, (5) they are forgiven in the last night of this month.’” He was asked: “O Messenger of Allâh! Is it the night of Power?” He replied: “No. Instead, when a worker completes his task, he is given his wage in full.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF THE NIGHT OF POWER

It is related from Ibn ‘Abbâs ؓ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was informed of a person from the Banî Isrâ’îl who carried weapons on his shoulder and fought in the cause of Allâh ﷻ for 1000 months. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was astonished by this and desired this for his *ummah* as well. He said: “O my Sustainer! You made the life-span of my followers the shortest and their deeds the least.” So Allâh ﷻ gave him the night of Power (*laylatul Qadr*) which is better than 1000 months – the extent to which the person from the Banî Isrâ’îl carried his weapons in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ gave this to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and to his *ummah* till the day of resurrection. It is thus one of the peculiarities of this *ummah*.

It is said that the name of that man was Sham‘ûn. He fought the enemy for 1000 months without leaving the saddle of his horse. He subjugated the unbelievers through the strength and bravery which he was blessed with. The unbelievers felt constrained by him. They therefore sent a messenger to his wife promising her a huge bowl filled with gold if she could tie him up, whereupon they would imprison him in a house of theirs and thereby be at rest from him. When he fell asleep at night, she tied him with a rope of fibres. When he got up, he moved his limbs and cut off the rope completely. He asked her: “Why did you do this?” She replied: “I wanted to test your strength.” When the unbelievers were informed of what happened, they sent her a chain [by which she could bind him]. She did the same thing with him and he broke the chain in like manner. Satan then went to the unbelievers and advised them that the woman must ask her husband as to what thing he is unable to untie and cut off. So they sent this message to her. She asked her husband and he replied: “My plaits of hair.” He had eight long plaits of hair which reached to the ground. When he fell asleep, she tied his feet with four of his plaits and his hands with the other four. The unbelievers then came, seized him and took him to their slaughter-house. This slaughter-house was 400 feet high. Despite its huge size, it had just one pillar. They

then cut off his ears and lips. All the people were gathered around there. The man asked Allâh ﷻ to give him the strength to break his bonds, the strength to shake the pillar in such a way that it falls on all of them, while he himself is saved from them. Allâh ﷻ gave him that strength. He broke off his bonds and shook that pillar. The roof of the slaughter-house fell on them and Allâh ﷻ destroyed all of them. He was thus freed from them.

When the Companions y heard this story, they said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Will we be able to reach his level of reward?” He replied: “I do not know.” He then asked Allâh ﷻ and Allâh ﷻ blessed him with the night of Power, as mentioned previously.

Anas ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “When it is the night of Power, Jibra’îl ؑ descends with a large group of angels. They pray for and greet every person who is standing or sitting in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.”

Abû Hurayrah ؓ said: “The angels descend onto earth on the night of Power in numbers that are more than the number of pebbles [on earth].” They then open the skies in order to descend. The lights of illumination then beam forth. A magnificent manifestation is experienced. The grand kingdom [of Allâh ﷻ] is displayed. The people experience this differently [according to their individual capacities]. There are those before whom the kingdom of the heavens and the earth are displayed. The veils covering the heavens are removed for him. He then witnesses the angels in their original forms.

There are those who are standing, those who are sitting, those who are bowing, those who are prostrating, those who are engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, those who are expressing their gratitude to Him, those who are glorifying Him, and those who are expressing His oneness.

Then there are those before whom Paradise is exposed. He thus sees its houses, palaces, doe-eyed damsels, rivers, trees and fruits. He also sees the Throne of the Merciful, which is the roof of Paradise. He sees the abodes of

the Prophets, the *aulyâ'* (the close friends of Allâh ﷺ), the martyrs, and the *siddîqîn* (the truthful ones). He dwells in this kingdom and watches all the manifestations of Allâh's ﷻ mercy. He also sees Hell. He sees all its levels and the abodes of the unbelievers.

Then there are those before whom the veils of Allâh ﷻ are removed. He thus looks at the beauty of Allâh ﷻ and he looks at nothing else.

‘Umar ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who spends the 27th night of the month of Ramadân in worship till the next morning, is more beloved in my sight than spending all the other nights of Ramadân in prayer.” Fatimâh *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* asked: “O my father! What should the weak men and women who are unable to stand up in prayer do?” He replied: “If they place a pillow against which they lie down, and then sit up for some time of that night in order to supplicate to Allâh ﷻ, then that is more beloved in my sight than my entire *ummah* remaining standing in prayer for the whole month of Ramadân.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who remains awake on the night of Power and offers two rak‘ats of salâh in which he seeks forgiveness, Allâh ﷻ forgives him. He immerses himself in the mercy of Allâh ﷻ and Jibra’îl ؑ passes his wing over him. And he on whom Jibra’îl ؑ passes his wing, will enter Paradise.”

ON THE VIRTUE OF ‘ÎD

This day which is the first day of Shawwâl and the tenth day of Dhul Hijjah is named ‘îd because the believers returned (from the Arabic word ‘*aud*) from the obedience of Allâh ﷻ which entailed the fulfilment of the compulsory fasts and the hajj towards the obedience of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ which entails the six fasts of Shawwâl and preparations to visit the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ [in Madînah]. It is also referred to as ‘îd because it returns year after year. It is also referred to as ‘îd because of the numerous benefits (from the Arabic word ‘*awâ*’ ‘îd) of kindness which Allâh ﷻ confers on this day. It is also referred to as ‘îd because of the return of happiness whenever this day returns.

The first ‘îd which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ performed was the ‘îdal-fitr in the second year of the emigration. He did not leave it out thereafter. It is therefore an emphasised Sunnah of his.

Abû Hurayrah ؓ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Adorn your ‘îd with the *takbîr* (by saying *Allâhu akbar* in abundance).”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Whoever says سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ 300 times on the day of ‘îd and sends the reward as a gift to the deceased Muslims, 1000 lights enter every grave and Allâh ﷻ will place 1000 lights in the grave of the person when he himself passes away.”

Wahb ibn Munabbih *rahimahullâh* relates that Satan wails and laments on every ‘îd day. All the other devils gather around him and ask: “O our master! Why are you angry?” He replies: “Allâh ﷻ forgave the *ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ on this day. You should therefore preoccupy them with pleasures and desires.”

Wahb *rahimahullâh* also relates that Allâh ﷻ created Paradise on the day of *‘îd al-fitr* and planted the Tûbâ tree on the day of *‘îd al-fitr*. He appointed Jibra’îl ﷺ for the conveying of revelation on the day of *‘îd al-fitr*. He accepted the repentance of the magicians of Pharaoh on the day of *‘îd al-fitr*.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who spends the night of *‘îd* in the worship of Allâh ﷻ expecting reward, his heart will not die on the day when hearts will die [i.e. the day of resurrection].”

It is related that ‘Umar ﷺ saw one of his sons on the day of *‘îd* wearing a worn out shirt. So he began crying. The son asked: “Why are you crying?” He replied: “O my son! I fear that your heart will break on the day of *‘îd* when other children see you wearing this worn out shirt.” The son said: “The person whom Allâh ﷻ deprives of His pleasure or the person who disobeys his mother and father will be the one whose heart will be really broken. I hope that Allâh ﷻ will be pleased with me by virtue of your pleasure with me.” ‘Umar ﷺ began crying, hugged the boy and supplicated for him. May Allâh ﷻ be pleased with both of them.

How beautiful the following words are:

قالوا غدا العيد ماذا أنت لابسه — قلت خلعة ساق عبده الجرعا

فقر وصبر ثوبان بينهما — قلب يرى ربه الأعياد والجمعا

العيد لي مأتم إن غبت يا أملي — والعياد كنت لي مرأى ومستمعا

“They said: ‘Tomorrow is *‘îd*. What are you going to wear?’ I replied: ‘These same old garments which this servant was given. Poverty and patience are two garments between which is a heart which sees its Master on the day of *‘îd* and Fridays. *‘Îd* is a day of mourning for me if I do not achieve my objective. The days of *‘îd* are days of seeing and listening [days of reflection] for me.’”

It is related that on the morning of the day of *'id al-fitr*, Allâh ﷻ despatches angels. They descend to earth and stand at the entrances of the streets and alleys. They announce in a voice that all the creations of Allâh ﷻ except the jinn hear. They say: "O *ummah* of Muhammad! Go out towards a generous Sustainer who gives abundant reward and forgives serious sins." Then when they appear at their place of salâh, Allâh ﷻ says to the angels: "What is the reward of the labourer when he has completed his task?" They reply: "His reward is that he should be paid his wage in full." Allâh ﷻ says: "I make you witness to the fact that I have made My pleasure and My forgiveness their reward."

ON THE VIRTUE OF THE FIRST TEN DAYS OF DHUL HIJJAH

Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are no days in which good deeds are more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than in these days.” In other words, the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah. The Companions asked: “Not even jihâd in the cause of Allâh?” He replied: “Not even jihâd in the cause of Allâh ﷻ except for that person who goes [in the cause of Allâh ﷻ] with his self and his wealth and does not return with either of the two.”

Jâbir ibn ‘Abdillâh رضي الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There are no days that are more beloved in the sight of Allâh ﷻ and more superior than these ten days.” He was asked: “Not even the like thereof in the cause of Allâh ﷻ?” He replied: “Not even the like thereof in the cause of Allâh ﷻ except the person who breaks the legs of his horse and soils his face in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* narrates that there was a youngster who, when he saw the new moon for the month of Dhul Hijjah, would start fasting. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard of this, he called for him and asked him: “What makes you fast in these days?” He replied: “May my parents be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allâh! These are the days for the ceremonies of hajj and they are the days of hajj. Perhaps Allâh ﷻ will include me in the supplications of the pilgrims.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Surely for each fast that you keep, you shall receive the reward of freeing 100 slaves, and 100 camels and 100 horses which are taken in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. When it is the 8th of Dhul Hijjah, you will receive the reward of freeing 1000 slaves, and 1000 camels and 1000 horses which are taken in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. When it is the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, you will receive the reward of freeing 2000 slaves, and 2000 camels and 2000 horses which are taken in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Fasting on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah is equal to fasting for two years. Fasting on the 10th of Muharram is equal to fasting for one year.”

The commentators say with regard to the following verse:

وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتَمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرِ

“We promised Mûsâ thirty nights and We completed it with another ten.”
(Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 141)

They say that this refers to the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah.

Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ relates that Allâh ﷻ chose four days, four months, four women, four who will enter Paradise first, and four people whom Paradise is desirous of.

As for the days, the first is Friday. There is a certain hour in this day wherein, if a Muslim servant asks of Allâh ﷻ for anything of this world and the hereafter, Allâh ﷻ will most certainly give it to him. The second day is the day of ‘Arafah [the 9th of Dhul Hijjah]. When it is the day of ‘Arafah, Allâh ﷻ boasts before His angels and says: “O My angels! Look at My servants who have come with dishevelled hair and dusty clothes. They spent their wealth and fatigued their bodies. Bear witness that I have forgiven them.” The third day is the 10th of Dhul Hijjah. When that day comes and a servant offers his sacrificial animal, then the first drop of blood that falls from it is an atonement for every sin that he committed. The fourth day is the *‘id al-fitr*. When the Muslims complete the fast of the month of Ramadân and go out for the *‘id salâh*, Allâh ﷻ says to His angels: “Every labourer seeks his wage. My servants kept the fast of the month and went out for the *‘id salâh* seeking their wage. I make you witness that I have forgiven them.” An announcer then calls out: “O *ummah* of Muhammad! You may return for I have turned your evils into good deeds.”

As for the months, they are Rajab, which is separate from the other sacred months, and then Dhul Qa‘dah, Dhul Hijjah and Muharram.

As for the women, they are Maryam bint ‘Imrân, Khadîjah bint Khuwaylid *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* who surpassed the women of the world in believing in Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, Âsiyah bint Muzâhim who was the wife of Pharaoh, and Fâtimah bint Muhammad who is the leader of the women of Paradise.

As for those who will enter Paradise first, every nation has such a person. Muhammad ﷺ will be the first from the Arabs. Salmân ﷺ will be the first from the Persians. Suhayb ﷺ will be the first from the Romans. And Bilâl ﷺ will be the first from the Abyssinians.

As for those four whom Paradise is desirous of, they are ‘Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ﷺ, Salmân al-Fârisî ﷺ, ‘Ammâr ibn Yâsir ﷺ and al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad ﷺ.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who fasts on the 8th of DhulHijjah, Allâh ﷻ will give him the reward that was given to Ayyûb عليه السلام for his patience over his illness. He who fasts on the 9th of DhulHijjah, Allâh ﷻ will give him a reward like that of ‘Îsâ عليه السلام.”

The Prophet ﷺ said: “When it is the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, Allâh ﷻ spreads out His mercy. There is no other day on which such a large number of people are freed. He who asks Allâh ﷻ for any need of this world and the hereafter on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, Allâh ﷻ will fulfil it for him. Fasting on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah atones for the previous year and the following year.”

The wisdom behind this – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – is that it is between two ‘îds, and both these days are days of joy for the believers. And there is no joy that is greater than the forgiveness of their sins. The tenth of Muharram comes after the two ‘îds. It is an atonement for the sins of one year. This day is for Mûsâ عليه السلام while the 9th of Dhul Hijjah is for our Prophet ﷺ. His honour supercedes that of others.

ON THE VIRTUE OF ‘ÂSHÛRÂ’

Ibn ‘Abbâs رضي الله عنه narrates that when the Prophet ﷺ came to Madînah, he found the Jews fasting on the day of ‘Âshûrâ’ (the tenth of Muharram). He asked them the reason for this. They replied: “This was the day on which Allâh ﷻ gave victory to Mûsâ and the Banî Isrâ’îl over the people of Pharaoh. We fast on this day out of respect for this.” The Prophet ﷺ said: “We are closer to Mûsâ عليه السلام than you.” He then ordered the Muslims to fast on this day.

There are many Ahâdîth on the virtues of ‘Âshûrâ’. Among them are these: the repentance of Âdam عليه السلام was accepted on this day, he was created on this day, he was admitted into Paradise on this day, the Throne, the Kursî (Chair), the heavens, the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars and Paradise were all created on this day, Ibrâhîm عليه السلام was born on this day, he was saved from the fire on this day. In like manner, Mûsâ عليه السلام and his followers were saved on this day and Pharaoh and his followers were drowned on this day. ‘Îsâ عليه السلام was born on this day and he was raised to the heavens on this day. It was on this day that Idrîs عليه السلام was raised to an elevated position. It was on this day that Noah’s ark anchored at Mt. Jûdî. It was on this day that Sulaymân عليه السلام was bestowed with a mighty kingdom. It was on this day that Yûnus عليه السلام was removed from the belly of the fish. It was on this day that Ya‘qûb عليه السلام regained his eye-sight. It was on this day that Yûsuf عليه السلام was removed from the well. It was on this day that Ayyûb عليه السلام was cured from his illness. The first time that rain fell from the skies onto earth was on the day of ‘Âshûrâ’.

Fasting on this day was a practice of different nations. It is said that it was compulsory before the fasting of Ramadân. It was then abrogated by the fasting of Ramadân. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast on this day before the emigration. When he came to Madînah, he emphasised it. Towards the end of his life he said: “If I am alive next year, I will fast on

the 9th and 10th.” But he passed away that very year and kept fast only on the 10th. However, he emphasised fasting on the 10th and also on the 9th or 11th. He said: “Fast a day before it and a day after it, and oppose the way of the Jews.” In the sense that they kept fast on the 10th only.

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates in *Shu‘ab al-Îmân* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “He who spends freely on his family and wife on the day of ‘Âshûrâ’, Allâh ﷻ will give him abundance in his sustenance for the entire year.”

A narration of at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* states: “A single dirham given in charity on this day equals 700 000 dirhams.” This narration is considered to be *munkar* – unknown.

As for the Hadîth that the person who applies antimony to his eye on this day, will never be afflicted by any ailment of the eye for the rest of that year; and the person who takes a bath on this day will not fall ill for the rest of the year – this Hadîth is fabricated.

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* explicitly states that applying antimony on this day is an innovation – *bid‘ah*.

Ibn al-Qayyim *rahimahullâh* said: “The Hadîth with regard to applying antimony, cooking seeds, applying oil, and applying perfume on the day of ‘Âshûrâ’ is a fabrication of liars.”

You should know that the martyrdom of al-Husayn ؑ on the day of ‘Âshûrâ’ is merely an indication of his higher rank and status in the sight of Allâh ﷻ and his inclusion in the ranks of his pure household. The person who thinks of his martyrdom on this day should do nothing more than say: “To Allâh we belong and to Him is our return” by way of following the order of Allâh ﷻ and trying to gain the reward that He set aside by the following words of the Qur’ân:

أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْتَخُونَ

“Upon such people are the bounties of their Sustainer and mercy. And it is they who are on the straight path.” (Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 157)

A person is warned against, and is warned again against involving himself in the innovations of the Shî‘ah and others like them in their expressions of mourning and grief. This is not the character of the believers. Had this been permissible, the passing away of his [Husayn’s ﷺ] grand father ﷺ would have been more worthy of this. Allâh ﷻ alone is sufficient for us and what an excellent protector He is!

ON THE VIRTUE OF HOSTING THE POOR

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not impose on the guest or else you will cause him to detest. He who causes the guest to detest will cause Allâh ﷻ to detest. He who causes Allâh ﷻ to detest, then Allâh ﷻ will detest him.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “There is no good in the person who is not hospitable.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by a man who had many camels and cattle. But he did not show any hospitality to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He then passed by a woman who had a few sheep. She slaughtered one for him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Look at these two. These characteristics and traits are in the control of Allâh ﷻ. He bestows good character to whomever He wills.”

Abû Râfi‘, the freed slave of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “A guest came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He said to me: ‘Go to so and so Jew and tell him to lend me some flour till the month of Rajab.’ The Jew replied: ‘By Allâh, I will not lend him without a mortgage.’ I informed the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ as to what the Jew said. He replied: ‘By Allâh, I am well known as *al-amîn* (the trustworthy one) in the heavens and on earth. If he loaned it to me, I would have certainly paid him back. Take this shield of mine and give it to him in mortgage.’”

It was the habit of Ibrâhîm ؑ that whenever he intended to eat, he would go out for about a mile or two looking for someone who would eat with him. He was given the title of “the father of guests”. Because of his sincerity in this regard, his hospitality continued. No night passed without a group of three to ten, and up to 100 eating with him. It is said that he was never without a guest on any night.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: “What is î mân?” He replied: “Providing food and extending the greeting.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “From among the acts of atonement and those that earn high ranks are providing food and offering salâh at night while the people are asleep.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about an accepted hajj. He replied: “It entails providing food and good speech.”

Anas ؓ said: “Every house in which no guest enters, no angels enter it as well.”

There are numerous other Traditions with regard to showing hospitality and providing food.

A poet said:

لم لا أحب الضيف أو - أرتاح من طرب إليه
والضيف يأكل رزقه - عندي ويشكرني عليه

“Why should I not love the guest? Or why should I not be moved with joy and delight by him when it is the guest who is eating his sustenance [which was destined for him] at my house, and yet he is thanking me for it!!?”

The wise sages said: “An act is not perfect if it is not done with a smiling face, good speech and if the person is not met in a good way.”

Another poet said:

أضاحك ضيفي قبل إنزال رحله - ويخصب عندي والمحل جديب
وما الخصب للأضياف في كثرة القرى - ولكنما وجه الكريم خصيب

“I joke and rejoice with my guest even before his luggage is unloaded. He gets hale and hearty by living with me although there is very little in the house. Guests do not become hale and hearty by abundance [of food] that is

offered to them, rather it is the beaming face of the generous person that makes them hale and hearty.”

It is the duty of the person who invites to ensure that he invites righteous people and not flagrant sinners. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made the following supplication for a person who invited him: “May the righteous people eat your food.”

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do not eat the food of anyone except the righteous person and none but the righteous should eat your food.”

A person should seek out the poor people specifically and not the wealthy. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “The worst food is the food of the *walîmah* (the food that is offered after a wedding by the man who just got married). The wealthy are invited to it to the exclusion of the poor.”

It is the duty of the person not to overlook his relatives in his hospitality. Overlooking them and leaving them out would cause alienation and severing of ties of kinship.

In like manner, a person should take his friends and associates into consideration in the sequence of his friendship with them. Inviting some and leaving out others would cause alienation in the hearts of those who are left out.

It is the duty of the person not to have any notions of pride, showing off and competition with others in his invitation. Rather, the intention should be to win the hearts of one’s fellow brothers, to emulate the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in providing food, and to bring happiness to the hearts of the believers.

It is the duty of the person not to invite a person whom he knows it will be difficult for him to accept the invitation. And that if he attends, he will be discomforted by the others who are present, for whatever the reason may be.

It is the duty of the person not to invite anyone except he who would like to accept the invitation. Sufyân *rahimahullâh* said: “He who invites a person to a meal while he dislikes accepting the invitation, then there is one sin against him [the person who invites]. And if the person who is invited accepts the invitation, then there are two sins against him. This is because he forced him to eat when he dislikes eating. Had he known that, he would not have eaten.”

Feeding a righteous person actually entails aiding in acts of obedience while feeding a flagrant sinner entails aiding in acts of disobedience.

A tailor asked Ibn al-Mubâarak *rahimahullâh*: “I sew the clothes of the rulers. Do you fear that I am one of those who are aiding the oppressors?” He replied: “No. Those who are aiding the oppressors are those who purchase cotton and needle from you. As for you, you are an oppressor yourself.”

As for the acceptance of an invitation, it is an emphasised Sunnah (*Sunnah mu’akkadah*). It is said that it is also obligatory in some instances.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “If I were invited to a meal of trotters, I would accept. If the arm of an animal was presented to me, I would accept it.”

ON SPEAKING AT A FUNERAL AND AT THE GRAVE

You should know that a funeral is an admonition for a person of insight. In it is a warning for him and a reminder for those who are heedless. When the heedless ones witness a funeral, it only increases their hard-heartedness. This is because they always assume that they will forever be attending the funeral of others. They do not even think that there will definitely come a time when they will be carried as corpses. Or, they know that this will also happen to them, but they consider it to be still a long way. They do not ponder over the fact that the deceased whom they are carrying had also made the same assumption. Their assumption was thus proven to be baseless and their time came sooner than they expected.

A person should therefore not look at a deceased person without thinking to himself that he is being carried, that he is to be carried very soon – that it might be tomorrow or the day after tomorrow.

It is related that when Abû Hurayrah  would see a funeral procession, he would say: “Continue, we are soon to follow.”

When Mak-hûl ad-Dimashqî *rahimahullâh* would see a funeral, he would say: “You are going in the morning, and we will go in the evening. What an imposing admonition this is, yet how quickly we become heedless. The first one departs and the next one has no intelligence [to realize that he is next].”

Usayd ibn Hudayr *rahimahullâh* said: “I did not witness a funeral without my self telling me anything except what is going to be done to him [the deceased] and where he is heading towards.”

When the brother of Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* passed away, Mâlik *rahimahullâh* went out to the funeral crying and saying: “By Allâh, do not tell me anything till I know to what abode he has gone to. And this I will never know as long as I am alive [in other words, I will also have to die in order to know exactly what lies in store].”

Al-A‘mash *rahimahullâh* said: “When we used to attend a funeral, we did not know who to console because every single person used to be overtaken with grief.”

Thâbit al-Bunânî *rahimahullâh* said: “When we used to attend funerals, every single person would have his head covered and would be crying. This was how fearful they were of death. As for these days, we do not see a group attending a funeral without the majority of them laughing and joking. They speak of nothing but the inheritance of the deceased and what he left behind for his inheritors. His relatives and associates think of nothing except how they can take possession of some of what he left behind. None from among them thinks about his own funeral procession and about what condition he will be in when he is carried [to his grave]. There is no reason for this heedlessness except the hardness of the hearts on account of excessive acts of disobedience and sins. The sins are so excessive that we have forgotten Allâh ﷻ, the last day, and all the terrors that lie ahead of us. We therefore engage in amusements, become heedless, and occupy ourselves in matters that are of no concern to us. We therefore ask Allâh ﷻ for vigilance from this negligence. The most that you will see from those who attend a funeral is their crying over the deceased. If they had any intelligence, they would have cried over their selves and not over the deceased.”

Ibrâhîm az-Zayyât *rahimahullâh* saw some people asking Allâh ﷻ to have mercy on the deceased. So he said: “If you asked Allâh ﷻ to have mercy on your selves it would have been better for you. The deceased has already passed the three terrors: (1) he has already seen the face of the angel of death, (2) he has already tasted the bitterness of death, (3) he has already experienced the fear of his end and is now safe [from all these three].”

Abû ‘Amr ibn al-‘Alâ’ *rahimahullâh* said: “I was sitting near Jarîr while the latter was dictating a poem to his scribe. A funeral procession then approached. So he said:

تَرَوْنَا الْجَنَائِزَ مُقْبِلَاتٍ - وَنَلْهُو حِينَ تَذْهَبُ مَدْبِرَاتٍ

كَرُوعَةٍ ثُلَّةٍ لِمَغَارٍ ذُئِبٍ - فَلَمَّا غَابَ عَادَتِ رَاتِعَاتٍ

“The funeral processions terrify us when they approach. But once they continue and are gone, we return to our amusements and diversions. [We are] like a flock of sheep which become terrified by the attack of a wolf. But once the wolf goes away, the sheep return to their grazing.”

From among the etiquette of attending a funeral is that the person should ponder, reflect, be awakened, make preparations, and walk in front with humility. The etiquette and Sunnah acts when attending a funeral are enumerated in the books of jurisprudence.


From the etiquette is that the person should have good thoughts about the deceased even if he was a flagrant sinner. And he should have critical thoughts about his self even if he is outwardly righteous. This is because the end [of any person] is uncertain. He does not know its reality.


It is related with regard to ‘Umar ibn Dharr *rahimahullâh* that one of his neighbours passed away. This neighbour was one who used to commit excesses against his self. Many people therefore abstained from attending his funeral. ‘Umar ibn Dharr *rahimahullâh* attended his neighbour’s funeral and offered salâh over him. When he was placed in his grave, he stood at the side and said: “May Allâh have mercy on you, O so and so person! You spent your entire life believing in the oneness of Allâh ﷻ and you soiled your face with prostration [in salâh], even though people say that you are a sinner and committed many sins. Who from among us is not a sinner and who from among us has not committed sins?!”

It is related that a person who was immersed in causing corruption passed away in one of the outer districts of Basra. His wife did not find anyone to help her to carry his corpse. None of his neighbours knew about her predicament because of his excessive sinning. She therefore hired the services of two carriers. She carried him to the place of salâh but no one offered salâh over him. She then carried him to the desert to bury him. Near this spot of burial there was a mountain where there lived a very ascetic person. She saw him as though he was waiting for the deceased person. He then came down in order to offer the salâh over him. This news spread in the city that the ascetic came down in order to offer salâh over such and such person. The people of the city therefore came out. The ascetic

performed the *salâh* and the people followed him. The people were astonished by the ascetic performing *salâh* over this deceased person. So he said to them: “I was told in a dream thus: ‘Go to a certain spot. You will see a deceased person with no one except his wife. Offer *salâh* over him for he is forgiven.’” At hearing this, the people became even more astonished. The ascetic called for his wife and asked her about him and his lifestyle. She replied: “As is well known, he used to spend the entire day in the brothel, drinking alcohol.” The ascetic said to her: “Think carefully. Do you know of any good deed that he used to do?” She replied: “Yes. Three things: (1) When he became sober from his intoxication in the morning, he would change his clothes, perform ablution and offer the *fajr salâh* in congregation. He would then return to the brothel and become engrossed in sin. (2) His house was never empty of one or two orphans. His kindness towards them was more than the kindness that he showed to his own children. He was extremely concerned about the orphans. (3) He would regain his senses after his intoxication in the dark of the night and cry, saying: ‘O my Sustainer! Which corner from the many corners of Hell do You wish to fill with this wretched person [referring to himself]?’” The ascetic then turned away and departed having solved the mystery of this deceased person.

Ad-Dahhâk *rahimahullâh* narrates that a man said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who is the most ascetic person?” He replied: “The person who does not forget the grave and its trials and tribulations. Who abandons excessive adornment of the world. Who gives preference to what is eternal [the hereafter] over what is temporary [this world]. Who does not count tomorrow as his days [i.e. does not expect to live till tomorrow]. Who considers himself to be from among the dwellers of the graves.”

‘Alî  was asked: “Why are you living near a grave-yard?” He replied: “I find them to be the best neighbours. I find them to be genuine neighbours. They hold back their tongues [they do not talk] and they remind me of the hereafter.”

When ‘Uthmân bin ‘Affân  used to stand by a grave, he would cry so profusely that his beard would get wet. He was asked in this regard: “When Paradise and Hell are mentioned, you do not cry. Yet you cry when you are

standing at a grave?!” He replied: “I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘The grave is the first stage of the hereafter. If a person succeeds in it, the stages that are to follow will be easier for him. If he does not succeed in it, the stages that are to follow will be more difficult.’”

It is said that ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âs ؓ looked at a grave-yard. So he dismounted from his animal and offered two rak‘ats of salâh. Someone asked him: “This is something that you never used to do.” He replied: “I thought of the people in the graves and the barrier that is between them and me. I therefore wanted to get closer to Allâh ﷻ through this.”

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* said: “The first thing that the grave will say to the deceased who comes into it is this: ‘I am the house of insects, the house of solitude, the house of isolation, and the house of darkness. This is what I prepared for you. Now what have you prepared for me?’”

Abu Dharr ؓ said: “Should I not inform you of the day of my poverty? It is the day when I am placed in my grave.”

ON FEARING THE PUNISHMENT OF HELL

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the supplication which the Prophet ﷺ used to make the most was: “O our Sustainer! Give us good in this world and good in the hereafter. And save us from the punishment of the Hell-fire.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ addressed the people saying: “Do not forget the two great things: Paradise and the Hell-fire.” He then cried till his tears flowed or moistened both sides of his beard. He then said: “I take an oath by that Being in whose control is my life, if you only knew what I know about the hereafter, you would walk on the surface of the earth and you would pour soil on your heads.”

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates in *al-Awsat* that Jibra’îl عليه السلام came to the Prophet ﷺ at a time when he did not usually come. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stood up to meet him and said: “O Jibra’îl! Why is it that I see you have changed colour?” He replied: “I only came to you after Allâh ﷻ ordered that the bellows of the Hell-fire be ignited.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O Jibra’îl! Describe the Hell-fire to me, or describe Hell to me.” He replied: “Allâh ﷻ ordered Hell to be ignited for 1000 years till it turned white. He then ordered it to be ignited again till it turned red. He then ordered it to be ignited again till it turned black. It is thus pitch black and dark. Its embers do not give off any light and its flames do not become extinguished. I take an oath by that Being who sent you as a Prophet with the truth, if a hole equal to the eye of a needle was to be opened from Hell, every single person on earth would die from its heat. I take an oath by that Being who sent you with the truth, if just one of the guards of Hell were to appear before the inhabitants of earth, every single one of them would die on account of his ugly appearance and the stench that emanates from him. I take an oath by that Being who sent you with the truth, if a single link from the chain of the inmates of Hell which Allâh ﷻ described in his Book was to be placed on the mountains of the world, they would disappear and it

would continue sinking till it reaches the lowest earth.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “I have heard enough, O Jibra’îl! I do not want my heart to burst and die.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then looked at Jibra’îl عليه السلام and saw him crying. So he said: “O Jibra’îl! Are you crying despite the lofty position that you enjoy with Allâh ﷻ?!” He replied: “Why should I not cry? I have every right to cry because it is possible that, in the knowledge of Allâh ﷻ, I will be in a condition that is different from which I am in at present. I do not know, I may well be tried as Satan was tried. He was among the angels [when he was tried]. I do not know, I may well be tried as Hârût and Mârût were tried.” On hearing this, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ began crying and Jibra’îl عليه السلام also cried. They continued crying till an announcement was made: “O Jibra’îl and O Muhammad! Allâh ﷻ made both of you secure from disobeying Him.” Jibra’îl عليه السلام then ascended [to the heavens] and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came out. He passed by a group of Ansâr who were laughing and playing around. He said to them: “Are you laughing when Hell is beyond you. If you only knew what I know, you would laugh little and cry a lot. You would not enjoy any food and drink. You would go out to the open lands, turning and resorting to Allâh ﷻ.” An announcement was made: “O Muhammad! Do not make My servants despondent. I sent you as a conveyor of glad tidings. I did not send you to make things difficult.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “Do things in moderation and do as much good as you can.”

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked Jibra’îl عليه السلام: “How is it that I never see Mîkâ’îl عليه السلام laughing?” He replied: “Mîkâ’îl عليه السلام never laughed ever since the Hell-fire was created.”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “This fire of yours [i.e. the fire of this world] is one part of the 70 parts of the fire of Hell. Were it not for the fact that it was extinguished with water on two occasions, you would not have been able to derive any benefit from it. It supplicates to Allâh ﷻ that He should not return it to it [i.e. to the fire of Hell].”

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates that ‘Umar رضي الله عنه recited this verse:

كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ

“When their skins get burnt up, We will change their skins for other skins so that they may continuously taste the punishment.” (Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 56)

‘Umar رضي الله عنه then said: “O Ka‘b! Explain this verse to me. If you are correct, I will say that you are correct. If you are wrong, I will reject your explanation.” So Ka‘b رضي الله عنه said: “The skin of man will get burnt and it will be replaced with a new skin 6000 times in one hour or in one day.” ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said: “You are correct.”

Al-Bayhaqî *rahimahullâh* narrates that al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* said with regard to the above verse: “The Hell-fire will devour them 70000 times each day. Each time it devours them, it will be said to them: ‘Return.’ And they will return as they were.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said: “The wealthiest person in this world from among the inmates of the Hell-fire will be brought and be merely dipped once into the Hell-fire. He will then be asked: ‘O man! Did you ever experience any good? Did you ever experience any comfort?’ He will reply: ‘No, by Allâh, O my Sustainer [I never experienced any good nor any comfort].’ Thereafter, the person who experienced the worst suffering in the world from among the inhabitants of Paradise will be brought and merely dipped in Paradise. He will then be asked: ‘O man! Did you ever see any suffering? Did you ever experience any misery?’ He will reply: ‘No, by Allâh. O my Sustainer! I never experienced any misery nor did I ever see any suffering.’”

Imâm Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said: “Crying will be set free on the inmates of the Hell-fire. They will start crying till the tears come to an end. They will then cry blood till a type of canal appears on their faces [due to excessive crying]. If ships were sent onto these canals, they would set sail.”

Abû Ya‘lâ *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “O people! Cry. If you cannot cry then adopt the expression of a crying person. Surely the inmates of the Hell-fire will cry therein till their tears flow onto their cheeks as though they were springs [from which water gushes forth]. They will continue crying till the tears come to an end. They will then cry blood, on account of which the eyes will become ulcerated.”

ON THE SCALE AND THE BRIDGE

Imâm Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* narrates from al-Hasan from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* that she began crying. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked her: "Why are you crying?" She replied: "I thought of the Hell-fire and began crying. Will you remember your family members on the day of resurrection?" The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: "There are three places where no one will think of anyone else: (1) at the scale [of deeds], till he knows whether his scale is light or heavy, (2) at the time when the books of deeds are handed out, till he knows whether he is going to receive it in his right hand, his left hand or from behind his back, (3) at the bridge (or the *sirât*) when he is placed between the two extremities of Hell, till he knows whether he will cross over it or not."

Imâm at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Anas ؓ who said: "I asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to intercede in my favour on the day of resurrection." He replied: "I will do that if Allâh wills." I asked: "Where should I look for you?" He replied: "The first place you should look for me is at the bridge." I asked: "What if I do not meet you at the bridge?" He replied: "Look for me at the scale." I asked: "What if I do not meet you at the scale?" He replied: "Look for me at the fountain [the Haud al-Kawthar, or the fountain of abundance]. You will definitely find me in any of these three places."

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "The scale will be placed on the day of resurrection. If the heavens and the earth were placed in it or weighed in it, it would take their weight. The angels will ask: "O our Sustainer! For who is this scale?" Allâh ﷻ will reply: "For whomever I will from My creation." The angels will say: "Glory be to You. We did not worship You as we ought to have."

The Sirât (Bridge) which is as sharp as a blade will then be brought. The angels will ask: "Who will cross this bridge?" Allâh ﷻ will reply:

“Whomever I will from My creation.” They will say: “Glory be to You. We did not worship You as we ought to have.”

Ibn Mas'ûd رضي الله عنه narrates: “The bridge will be placed over Hell. It is like the edge of a sharp sword. It is extremely smooth and slippery. Over it are hooks of fire. The hooks will seize some people and fling them into Hell or topple others. There are those who will pass it as swift as lightning. Such people will be saved from it without any hesitation. There are those who will pass it as swift as the wind. Such people will be saved from it without any hesitation. Then there are those who will cross it at the pace of a galloping horse. Then there are those who will cross it at the pace of a running man. Then there are those who will cross it at the pace of a brisk walk. Then there are those who will cross it at the pace of a walking man. The last person to cross it will be the one whom the fire burnt and who experienced misery in it. Allâh ﷻ will admit him into Paradise through His grace, kindness and mercy. It will be said to him: “Ask for whatever you desire.” He will say: “O my Sustainer! Are You mocking me whereas You are the all-powerful Sustainer!?” It will be said to him: “Ask for whatever you desire.” He will ask for whatever he desires. When he has no desires left, Allâh ﷻ will say to him: “For you is whatever you asked for and twice that.”

Imâm Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates from Umm Mubashshir al-Ansârîyyah *radhiyallâhu 'anhâ* that she heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying to Hafsa *radhiyallâhu 'anhâ*: “If Allâh ﷻ wills, none will enter Hell from those who gave the pledge of allegiance under the tree.” She said: “Indeed, O Messenger of Allâh!” He then chided her. So she said: “[Allâh ﷻ says]: ‘Every single one of you will enter it.’” So the Prophet ﷺ said: “Allâh ﷻ says: ‘We will then save those who were righteous and We will leave the wrongdoers therein, fallen on their knees.’” (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 72)

Imâm Ahmad *rahimahullâh* states that a group of scholars differed with regard to crossing the bridge. Some state that a believer will not cross it. Others state that everyone will cross it and that Allâh ﷻ will then save the righteous ones. So some of them asked Jâbir ibn 'Abdillâh رضي الله عنه with regard

to this. He said: “Everyone will cross it.” He then placed his fingers in his ears and said: “May my ears become deaf if I did not hear the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: ‘Passing over means entering it. No good or evil person will be left without entering it. It will then be a coolness and peace for the believer as it was for Ibrâhîm عليه السلام. This will be to such an extent that the fire, or he said, Hell, will quiver from their cold. ‘We will then save those who were righteous and We will leave the wrongdoers therein, fallen on their knees.’” (Sûrah Maryam, 19: 72)

Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates: “The people will enter the Hell-fire. They will then traverse it in accordance with their deeds. The first will cross it with the speed of lightning, then with the speed of wind, then like the gallop of a horse, then like a person riding a horse, then like a running person, then like a walking person.”

ON THE DEMISE OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

Ibn Mas'ûd ؓ narrates: We went to see the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in the house of our mother, 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*, when the time of departure drew near. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ looked at us and his eyes began tearing. He then said: "Welcome to you. May Allâh ﷻ give you long life. May Allâh ﷻ give you refuge. May Allâh ﷻ help you. I advise you to constantly fear Allâh ﷻ. I advise you to constantly remember Allâh ﷻ. I am certainly a clear warner to you from Him. Do not transgress the commands of Allâh ﷻ in His land and over His servants. The time has drawn near. The time to return to Allâh ﷻ is close. The time to go to *Sidratul Muntahâ* (the furthest lote tree) to Paradise, and to *al-Ka's al-Awfâ* (the filled cup) has drawn near. Convey my greeting and the mercy of Allâh ﷻ among yourselves and to those who enter the religion after me."

It is related that at the time of his demise, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked Jibra'il ؑ: "Who will see to my *ummah* after me?" Allâh ﷻ inspired Jibra'il ؑ saying: "Tell My beloved that I will not forsake him with regard to his *ummah*. Give him the glad tidings that he will be the first to leave this earth at the time of resurrection, that he will be their leader when they are gathered, and that Paradise is prohibited to the other nations till his *ummah* enters it." On hearing this, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: "Now I am satisfied."

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: "The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked us to bathe him with seven buckets of water from seven wells. When we did that, he experienced some relief. He then went out and led the people in *salâh*. He sought forgiveness for the people of Uhud and supplicated for them. He then advised good relationships with the Ansâr by saying this: "O assembly of Muhâjirûn! You are increasing while the Ansâr are not increasing in the position in which they are today. The Ansâr are my leather bag to which I sought refuge. You should therefore honour the one who is good from

among them and overlook the one who does wrong among them.” He then said: “A servant has been given the choice between this world and what is with Allâh ﷻ. The servant chose what is with Allâh ﷻ.” On hearing this, Abû Bakr ؓ began crying and felt that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was referring to himself. So the Prophet ﷺ said: “Hold on, O Abû Bakr! Shut all these doors and windows that lead to the masjid except the door of Abû Bakr. Surely I do not know any person who was a better companion than Abû Bakr. “

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away in my house on the day when it was my turn. He passed away with his head between my chest and throat. Allâh ﷻ mixed my saliva with his at the time of his demise. My brother, ‘Abd ar-Rahmân, came to me with a miswâk in his hand. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ began looking at it. I knew that he liked it. So I asked him: ‘Should I get it for you?’ He indicated in the affirmative with his head. So I took it [from my brother] and placed it in his mouth. He felt it hard. So I asked him: ‘Should I soften it for you?’ He indicated in the affirmative with his head. So I softened it for him. There was a small utensil of water in front of him. He placed his hand in it and said: ‘There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. Surely death comes with its pangs.’ He then straightened his hand saying: ‘*Ar-rafiq al-a’lâ, ar-rafiq al-a’lâ* – the highest companionship, the highest companionship.’ [In other words, I desire the highest companionship of Allâh ﷻ]. On hearing this, I said to my self, ‘Now that he said this, he no longer wishes to be with us.’”

Sa’îd ibn ‘Abdillâh narrates from his father who said: “When the Ansâr saw that the condition of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was getting more serious, they stood around the masjid. Al-‘Abbâs ؓ went to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him of where the Ansâr are and of their fear [for his life]. Thereafter, al-Fadl ؓ entered and also informed him of the same thing. ‘Alî ؓ then entered and also informed him of the same thing. He then extended his hand and said: “Lift me up.” When they lifted him up, he said: “What are you saying?” They said: “We fear that you are going to pass away.” In the meantime, when the women saw the men gathering around

the musjid, they began screaming. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then got up and came out, taking support from ‘Alî ؓ and al-Fadl ؓ, with al-‘Abbâs ؓ in front of him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had a bandage around his head. As they were taking him to the musjid, his feet were dragging on the ground. He eventually sat on the lowest step of the pulpit. The people hastened forward and sat around him. He praised and glorified Allâh ﷻ and then said: “O people! I have been informed that you are fearing my death. It seems that you are rejecting death [with regard to me]. Why should you reject the death of your Prophet? Did I not inform you of my death? Did you not inform me of your death? Did any Prophet before me live forever, that I should I now live among you forever? Listen! I am going to join my Sustainer and you are also going to join your Sustainer. I advise you with good relationships with the early Muhâjirûn and I advise the Muhâjirûn with good relationships among themselves. Surely Allâh ﷻ says: ‘By the token of time! Man is certainly in loss. Except those who brought faith and advised each other in matters of the truth and advised each other with patience.’ Surely matters come to pass by the permission of Allâh ﷻ. You should therefore not try to delay or hasten any matter. Surely Allâh ﷻ does not hasten a matter by the hastening of anyone. He who tries to overpower Allâh ﷻ, He will overpower him. He who tries to deceive Allâh ﷻ, He will prove his deception wrong. Is it possible that when you turn away, you will cause corruption in the land and that you will sever your ties of kinship? I advise you to have good relationships with the Ansâr. Surely they are the ones who provided refuge to îmân before you. Did they not share the fruits with you? Did they not accommodate you in their homes? Did they not give preference to you despite being in dire circumstances themselves? Listen! Whoever is given the authority to rule between even two people, should accept from the good and pardon the evil one. Listen! Do not give preference to others over them. Listen! I am going ahead of you and you are going to join me. Listen! Our meeting place will be the fountain (the fountain of abundance – *al-Haud al-Kawthar*). My fountain was presented before the Basra of Syria and the Sanaa of Yemen. The drain of abundance is poured in it. Its water is whiter than milk, softer than foam and sweeter than honey. Whoever drinks thereof will never experience thirst again. Its pebbles are pearls and its soil is of musk.

Whoever is deprived of it tomorrow, is actually deprived of all good. Listen! Whoever desires to meet me at this fountain tomorrow should hold back his tongue and hand except from that which is appropriate.”

Al-‘Abbâs ؓ said: “Advise the Quraysh.” He replied: “I advise the Quraysh to uphold this religion because the people follow them. People do good by their doing good and they commit wrong by their committing wrong. I therefore advise the people of Quraysh to do good among the people. O people! Sins cause a change in bounties and an alteration in destinies. When the people do good, their leaders also do good. When the people become evil, they disobey them. Allâh ﷻ says:

وَكَذَلِكَ نُؤَيِّ بِغَضِ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“In like manner do we turn the wrong-doers to each other because of what they earned.” (Sûrah al-An‘âm, 6: 129)

Ibn Mas‘ûd ؓ narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said to Abû Bakr ؓ: “Ask, O Abû Bakr!” He replied: “O Messenger of Allâh! Has the time [of departure from this world] drawn near?” He said: “It has drawn near and it is hovering above.” Abû Bakr ؓ said: “O Prophet of Allâh, may you enjoy whatever Allâh ﷻ has in store for you. If only I knew where our place of return is going to be.” The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: “To Allâh, to *Sidratul Muntahâ*, then to Paradise and the highest Garden of Eden, then to *al-Ka’s al-Awfâ* and the Highest Companionship, then to the full share [of reward] and a life of pleasure.” Abû Bakr ؓ said: “O Messenger of Allâh! Who should take charge of bathing you?” He replied: “The men from my family – those who are closest and then those that follow.” He asked: “What should we use to enshroud you?” He replied: “In these clothes that I am wearing, in a Yemeni garment, and in the white cloth of Egypt.” He asked: “How should we perform the *salâh* over you?” All of us who were present began crying and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ also began crying. He then said: “Wait a bit. May Allâh ﷻ forgive you all and may He reward you well on behalf of your Prophet. Once you have completed bathing me and enshrouding me, place me on my bed in this house of mine, on the edge of

my grave. Then leave me for some time because the first to offer salâh over me will be Allâh ﷻ: ‘It is He who sends salutation to you and His angels as well...’ (Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 43) Allâh ﷻ will then permit the angels to offer salâh over me. The first who will come to me from the creation of Allâh ﷻ and who will offer salâh over me will be Jibra’îl ﷺ. He will be followed by Mîkâ’îl ﷺ, then Isrâfîl ﷺ and then the angel of death with a large number of angels. Thereafter, all the other angels will come. Then you should follow. You should come in groups. Offer salâh over me in groups, one after the other. And greet me [by saying ‘Peace be on you, O Messenger of Allâh!’]. Do not cause me any pain by any shouting and crying out aloud. The imâm from among you should commence. He should be followed by members of my family – those who are closest and then those that follow. Then the groups of women followed by the groups of children.” Abû Bakr ؓ asked: “Who should place you in the grave?” He replied: “A group from my family – those who are closest and then those that follow, with many angels. You cannot see them but they can see you. You may now leave and convey what I said to those who are not present.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “When it was the day on which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away, the people saw some improvement in his condition at the beginning of the day. The people therefore dispersed to their houses and other tasks, feeling pleased [that his condition has improved]. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was left alone with his wives. While we were like that, not having so much of hope and not being so happy as we were on that day [after seeing that his condition had improved], the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to us: “Leave me alone because here is the angel asking permission to come to me.” So everyone except me left the room. His head was resting on my lap. He then sat up. I moved away to one corner of the room while he spoke in privacy to the angel for a long time. He then called me and placed his head on my lap. He asked the women to come back. I said to him: ‘This angel who came now does not sound like Jibra’îl ﷺ.’ He replied: ‘Indeen, O ‘Â’ishah! That was the angel of death. He came to me and said: ‘Allâh ﷻ sent me and ordered me not to come to you till you permit me. If you do not permit me, I will depart. If you permit me, I will come in. Allâh ﷻ also ordered me not to

take away your life till you order me to do so. So what do you order me to do?’ I said: ‘Wait a bit till Jibra’îl comes to me, because this is the time that he normally comes to me.’ ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: ‘We were now faced with a matter for which we had no answer and no opinion. We were all dumbfounded. It was as though we were struck by something which totally baffled us – which never baffled us in such a way prior to this. Not a single family member uttered a word out of fear for that matter and out of terror that filled our bodies.’ She said: ‘Jibra’îl ﷺ then came at the time that he normally used to come. He extended the greeting. I recognized his sound. The rest of the family left the room. He entered and said: ‘Allâh ﷻ conveys His peace to you and asks how you are – although He knows best what you are going through. However, He wants to increase your honour and reputation, and He wants to perfect your honour and reputation over the creation. And that it should be a mannerism among your followers [i.e. it should become a mannerism among the believers to inquire of each other].’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied: ‘I find some pain.’ Jibra’îl ﷺ said: ‘Bear glad tidings because Allâh ﷻ willed to convey you to whatever He prepared for you.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘O Jibra’îl! The angel of death came to me.’ He then related his conversation with the angel of death to Jibra’îl ﷺ. Jibra’îl ﷺ said: ‘O Muhammad! Your Sustainer is eager to have you. Did he not inform you of what he wants? By Allâh, the angel of death never sought permission from anyone, nor will he ever seek permission from anyone. Listen! Your Sustainer is going to perfect your honour and He is eager to have you.’ The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: ‘Then do not leave till he [angel of death] comes.’

He then permitted the women to re-enter. When they came in, he said: “O Fâtimah! Come near.” She went very close to him and he whispered something to her. When she raised her head, her eyes were tearing and she could not speak [out of sadness]. He again said: “Come near.” She went very close to him and he whispered something to her. When she raised her head, she was smiling and was unable to speak [due to happiness]. This was very astonishing to us. Later on we asked her about this, so she said: “He told me that he was going to pass away on that day. I therefore began crying. He then said to me: ‘I supplicated to Allâh ﷻ to make you the first

to join me from my family and that you should be with me. I therefore began smiling.” She then brought her two sons [Hasan ﷺ and Husayn ﷺ] close to him and he began sniffing them.

The angel of death then came, extended the greeting and sought permission to enter. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave him permission to enter. The angel said: “What do you order us to do, O Muhammad?” He replied: “Join me to my Sustainer now.” He replied: “Indeed. On this very day. Your Sustainer is extremely desirous of you. He never hesitated about anyone as He did about you. He never stopped me from going to anyone without permission except when I was coming to you. However, your time is still to come.” He then left. Jibra’îl ﷺ then entered and said: “Peace be on you, O Messenger of Allâh! This is the last time I am ever going to descend to earth [with revelation]. The revelation has now been shut. I have traversed the entire earth. I had no work on earth except you. I had no work on earth except to come and meet you and to remain at my post. I take an oath by that Being who sent Muhammad with the truth, there is no one in the house who can be given the choice to say anything in this regard. Nor can anyone send a message to any of his people bearing in mind the great speech that we hear from him. We have experienced this and we fear it.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “I then went to the Prophet ﷺ and placed his head between my breasts and held him by his chest. He began to lose consciousness till he was overcome by unconsciousness. His forehead was perspiring profusely. I never saw any human perspiring like this. I began wiping off his perspiration. I never experienced any fragrance better than this. When he used to regain consciousness, I would say to him: ‘May my parents, my life and my entire family be sacrificed for you. Your forehead is perspiring so profusely.’ He said: ‘O ‘Â’ishah! The soul of a believer departs through perspiration while the soul of an unbeliever departs from the corners of his mouth – like that of the soul of a donkey.’ It was then that we began trembling. We sent messages to our families. The first person to come to us was my brother. My father sent him to me. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away before anyone could come. It was Allâh ﷻ who had diverted them away because He had sent Jibra’îl ﷺ and Mîkâ’îl ﷺ to him. Whenever he would regain consciousness, he would say: ‘I desire the

highest companionship [of Allâh ﷺ].’ It was as though the choice [of remaining in this world or departing] was repeated to him. When he could speak easily, he would say: ‘Be mindful ofsalâh, be mindful of salâh. You will continue remaining strong as long as you offer salâh in congregation. Be mindful of salâh, be mindful of salâh.’ He continued advising in this regard till he passed away while saying: ‘Be mindful of salâh, be mindful ofsalâh.’”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away between mid-morning and mid-day on Monday.” Fâtimah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “I never experienced a sadder day than Monday. The *ummah* will continue being afflicted by something serious on a Monday.” Umm Kulthûm *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said a similar thing on the day when ‘Alî ؓ was afflicted in Kufah. She said: “I never experienced a sadder day than Monday. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away on that day. ‘Alî ؓ was killed on that day. My father was killed on that day. I never experienced a sadder day than Monday.”

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: “When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away, the people crowded and a wailing sound could be heard. The angels covered the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ with my garments. The people began differing as regards the demise of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Some people did not believe that he passed away. Others were left dumb. They only spoke after some time. Others were left astounded and could not speak logically. Others still had full control over themselves. Others merely sat down. ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb ؓ was among those who did not believe that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away. ‘Alî ؓ was from among those who merely sat down. ‘Uthmân ؓ was from among those who were left dumb. There was not anyone from among the Muslims who were in a condition similar to that of Abû Bakr ؓ and al-‘Abbâs ؓ. Allâh ﷻ helped both of them with inspiration and level-headedness. The people did not consider the words of Abû Bakr ؓ till al-‘Abbâs ؓ came. He said: ‘I take an oath by that Being apart from whom there is none worthy of worship, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ has certainly tasted death. When he was alive

among you, Allâh ﷻ had said: ‘You are certainly to die and they are certainly to die. Then you will dispute before your Sustainer on the day of resurrection.’ (Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 31) Abû Bakr ؓ received the news while he was with the Banî al-Harth ibn al-Khazraj [on the outskirts of Madînah]. He arrived and went into the room where the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was. He looked at him, lowered himself towards him and kissed him. He then said: ‘May my parents be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allâh! Allâh ﷻ will not make you taste death twice. By Allâh, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ has certainly passed away.’ He then went out to the people and addressed them saying: ‘O people! He who was worshipping Muhammad should know that Muhammad has passed away. He who was worshipping the Lord of Muhammad should know that He is living and never dies. Allâh ﷻ said: ‘Muhammad is but a Messenger. Messengers before him also passed away. If he passes away or is killed, will you turn back on your heels?’ (Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 144) It was as though the people hadn’t heard this verse prior to that day.”

Another narration states that when the news reached Abû Bakr ؓ, he entered the house of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He was sending salutations to the Prophet ﷺ while his eyes were tearing, and a choking sound was emanating from him as though he was panting out of thirst. This, despite the fact that he was strong in his actions and speech. He then lowered himself to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, uncovered his face, kissed his forehead and cheeks, passed his hand over his face and began to cry. He then said: “May my parents, my self and my family be sacrificed for you. You were pure when you were alive and you are pure while you have passed away. By your passing away, that thing has been severed which was not severed by the death of any other Prophet [In other words, the chain of prophet-hood and messenger-ship has now come to an end. Divine revelation has also come to an end]. You are beyond description [we cannot describe you sufficiently]. You are beyond crying [we cannot cry sufficiently over you]. You gave your individual attention [to all] to such an extent that you became a consolation [to everyone]. You gave your general attention [to all] to such an extent that we were all equal before you. Were it not for the fact that your death was by your choice, we would have easily

killed ourselves out of grief. Were it not for your prohibiting us from [undue] crying, we would have finished all the waters of the springs and fountains in crying over you. However, there is something that we cannot deny ourselves: grief [over you] and constantly thinking of you. These are two things which will constantly remain with us. O Allâh! Convey all this to him from us. O Muhammad! Remember us when you are with your Sustainer and let us be in your thoughts all the time. Were it not for the tranquillity which you left behind, no one would be able to get up because of the loneliness that you have left behind. O Allâh! Convey all this to Your Prophet from us and safeguard him among us.”

Let this be the last which Allâh ﷻ enabled us to do. May He draw our hearts towards Him so that we may have a beautiful example for us in the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. We hope that Allâh ﷻ changes our evils with good deeds and that He joins us with our Prophet ﷺ on îmân. Surely Allâh ﷻ is the most generous of all who are asked of, and the most honourable of all in whom hopes are placed. All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ, the Sustainer of the worlds.

- [1] Ibn Khalikân, Wafayât al-A'yân, vol. 4, p. 216.[«Return»](#)
- [2] Name of a city in Khurâsân, Persia.[«Return»](#)
- [3] As-Subkî, Tabaqât ash-Shâfi'îyyah al-Kubrâ, vol. 4, pp. 102-103.[«Return»](#)
- [4] Ibid.[«Return»](#)
- [5] Ibn Khalikân, Wafayât al-A'yân, vol. 4, p. 216.[«Return»](#)
- [6] Al-Asnawî, Tabaqât ash-Shâfi'îyyah, vol. 2, p. 244.[«Return»](#)
- [7] As-Subkî, Tabaqât ash-Shâfi'îyyah al-Kubrâ, vol. 4, p. 105.[«Return»](#)
- [8] Al-Asnawî, Tabaqât ash-Shâfi'îyyah, vol. 2, p. 244.[«Return»](#)
- [9] As-Subkî, Tabaqât ash-Shâfi'îyyah al-Kubrâ, vol. 4, pp. 105, 106.[«Return»](#)
- [10] Ibn Khalikân, Wafayât al-A'yân, vol. 4, p. 219.[«Return»](#)
- [11] Sûrah az-Zukhruf, 43: 35.[«Return»](#)
- [12] Sûrah al-Hijr, 15: 45.[«Return»](#)
- [13] Sûrah at-Tûr, 52: 17.[«Return»](#)
- [14] Sûrah ad-Dukhân, 44: 52.[«Return»](#)
- [15] Sûrah ash-Shûrâ, 26: 28.[«Return»](#)
- [16] Sûrah al-Jâthiyah, 45: 28.[«Return»](#)
- [17] Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 119.[«Return»](#)
- [18] Sûrah Yâ Sîn, 36: 58.[«Return»](#)

- [19] Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 146.[«Return»](#)
- [20] Sûrah ash-Shûrâ, verse 19.[«Return»](#)
- [21] Sûrah al-Hashr, verse 18.[«Return»](#)
- [22] Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 54.[«Return»](#)
- [23] Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.[«Return»](#)
- [24] Sûrah al-‘Ankabût, 29: 69.[«Return»](#)
- [25] Sûrah ash-Shûrâ, 26: 20.[«Return»](#)
- [26] Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 19.[«Return»](#)
- [27] Sûrah al-Hijr, 15: 44.[«Return»](#)
- [28] Sûrah al-Hâqqah, 69: 32.[«Return»](#)
- [29] Sûrah an-Nisâ', verse 145.[«Return»](#)
- [30] Sûrah Maryam, 19: 71.[«Return»](#)
- [31] Sûrah at-Tahrîm, 66: 8.[«Return»](#)
- [32] Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 19.[«Return»](#)
- [33] Sûrah ash-Shûrâ, 26: 25.[«Return»](#)
- [34] Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 70.[«Return»](#)
- [35] Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 68-70.[«Return»](#)
- [36] Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 16.[«Return»](#)
- [37] Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 31.[«Return»](#)
- [38] Sûrah Yâ Sîn, 36: 59.[«Return»](#)

- [39] Sûrah al-Qamar, 54: 55.[«Return»](#)
- [40] Sûrah ash-Shu‘arâ, 26: 88-89.[«Return»](#)
- [41] Sûrah at-Tahrîm, 66: 11.[«Return»](#)
- [42] Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 31.[«Return»](#)
- [43] Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 23.[«Return»](#)
- [44] Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 53.[«Return»](#)
- [45] Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 72.[«Return»](#)
- [46] Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 14.[«Return»](#)
- [47] Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 205.[«Return»](#)
- [48] Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 110.[«Return»](#)
- [49] Sûrah al-Mâ’idah, 5: 2.[«Return»](#)
- [50] Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 44.[«Return»](#)
- [51] Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 71.[«Return»](#)
- [52] Sûrah al-Mâ’idah, 5: 79.[«Return»](#)
- [53] Sûrah al-An‘âm, 6: 153.[«Return»](#)
- [54] Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 16.[«Return»](#)
- [55] Sûrah Yâ Sîn, 36: 9.[«Return»](#)
- [56] Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 30.[«Return»](#)
- [57] Sûrah Banî Isrâ’îl, 17: 80.[«Return»](#)
- [58] Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 31.[«Return»](#)

- [59] Sûrah at-Tahrîm, 66: 8. [«Return»](#)
- [60] Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 222. [«Return»](#)
- [61] Sûrah Banî Isrâ'îl, 17: 25. [«Return»](#)
- [62] Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 135. [«Return»](#)
- [63] Sûrah al-Mutaffifîn, 83: 1. [«Return»](#)
- [64] Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 2. [«Return»](#)
- [65] Sûrah al-An'âm, 6: 92. [«Return»](#)
- [66] Sûrah al-Ma'ârij, 70: 23. [«Return»](#)
- [67] Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 1-2. [«Return»](#)
- [68] Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 27. [«Return»](#)
- [69] Sûrah al-Mâ'ûn, 107: 5. [«Return»](#)
- [70] Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 12. [«Return»](#)
- [71] Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 12. [«Return»](#)
- [72] Sûrah al-Humazah, 104: 1. [«Return»](#)
- [73] Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 34-35. [«Return»](#)
- [74] Sûrah al-Ma'ârij, 70: 24-25. [«Return»](#)
- [75] Sûrah al-An'âm, 6: 104. [«Return»](#)
- [76] Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 5. [«Return»](#)
- [77] Sûrah al-An'âm, 6: 151. [«Return»](#)
- [78] Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 30. [«Return»](#)

[79] Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 68.[«Return»](#)

[80] Sûrah Hûd, 11: 83.[«Return»](#)

[81] Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 1.[«Return»](#)

[82] Sûrah Muhammad, 47: 22-23.[«Return»](#)

[83] Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 27.[«Return»](#)

[84] Sûrah ar-Rad, 13: 25.[«Return»](#)

[85] Sûrah Muhammad, 47: 22-23.[«Return»](#)

[86] Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 180.[«Return»](#)

[87] Sûrah Hâ Mîm as-Sajdah/Fussilat, 41: 6-7.[«Return»](#)

[88] Sûrah al-Qasas, 28: 77.[«Return»](#)

[89] Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 11.[«Return»](#)

[90] Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 216.[«Return»](#)

[91] Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 47.[«Return»](#)

[92] Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 110.[«Return»](#)

[93] Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 281.[«Return»](#)

[94] The angels that are deputed to thrust the damned into the Hell-fire.[«Return»](#)

[95] The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ demonstrated with his hands, taking heaps of wealth and giving it to his right, to his left and in front of him.[«Return»](#)

[96] Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 104.[«Return»](#)

[97] Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 108.[«Return»](#)

[98] Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 64.[«Return»](#)

[99] Jealous in this context is not a negative attribute. Rather, it is a praiseworthy quality which every self-respecting husband ought to have in his relationship with his wife. A self-respecting Muslim husband can never allow or tolerate his wife to speak with strangers, to allow them to come to his house, or to have any dealings with his wife.[«Return»](#)

[100] A special place in al-Musjid an-Nabawî set aside as a residence for poor and needy Muslims.[«Return»](#)

[101] Jizyah is a payment collected from non-Muslims living in an Islamic state in return for their protection and guarantee of their rights.[«Return»](#)

[102] Since the person who is regular in performing the above deeds expects forgiveness for his sins, an increase in his good deeds and admission into Paradise, the Prophet ﷺ compared him to a person guarding the Islamic border (ribât) expecting martyrdom and forgiveness. Others are of the opinion that the above good deeds are named ribât because they bind the person and prevent him from committing sins and acts of disobedience. Allâh ﷻ knows best.[«Return»](#)

[103] Sûrah at-Tahrîm, 66: 6.[«Return»](#)

[104] Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 275.[«Return»](#)

[105] A member of an Arab trading people who flourished southeast of Palestine, around Petra, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. (Collins English Dictionary)[«Return»](#)

[106] What this means is that if he needs comfort and consolation, and therefore turns to you, you must turn to him, get close to him, and provide him with the comfort and consolation that he needs. If he feels to be left alone, leave him alone and do not cling to him at such times.[«Return»](#)

[107] This is used to show a very short period of time.[«Return»](#)

[108] A mahram woman is a woman whom a person cannot marry, e.g one's mother, sister, maternal and paternal aunts, etc. [«Return»](#)

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